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BECOMING SCHOLARS:
CONSTRUCTING LITERACY IN A LEARNING DISABILITIES ENVIRONMENT

A Dissertation Presented

by

JOHN E. VILLEMAIRE

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

February 2003

School of Education

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CONSTRUCTING LITERACY IN A LEARNING DISABILITIES ENVIRONMENT

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JOHN E. VILLEMAIRE

Approved as to style and content by:

Catherine Luna, Chair

Judith Solsken, Member

Stanley Scarpati, Member

Anne Herrington, Member

Andrew Effrat, Dean
School of Education

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ABSTRACT

BECOMING SCHOLARS:
CONSTRUCTING LITERACY IN A LEARNING DISABILITIES ENVIRONMENT

FEBRUARY 2003

JOHN E. VILLEMAIRE, B.S., UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

M.A., KEENE STATE COLLEGE

ED.D., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Directed by: Professor Catherine Luna

This qualitative study seeks to examine literacy acquisition and identity formation patterns in a group of learning disabled labeled (LDL) college students. This study involved the formation of a genre/constructive inspired reading and study skills class. This genre/constructive inspired class was then used with a group of students enrolled in Piedmont College, a small private two-year college specifically designed for students diagnosed with Learning Disabilities. Piedmont College was an institution organized around principles of cognitivism and information processing.

In this study I have examined the ramifications of using an alternative constructive pedagogy in an institution dominated by information or cognitive pedagogy. Cognitive instructional techniques emphasize a skills-based curriculum leading to metacognition as a goal. My alternative pedagogy emphasized membership and participation leading to a concept I call production of knowledge. Production of knowledge is the ability of members to see themselves as sanctioned to create what is seen as viable, valued information and is an essential part of membership in an academic community.

The findings of using this alternative pedagogy relate to both literacy and identity. Research reveals a complex literacy and identity formation process with these LDL students. This is not a simple case of skills development.

In the area of literacy, research findings suggest that all students enter the class with a general understanding of academic literacy. As the class proceeds, however, they are able to develop and deepen this understanding. Greater degrees of membership are thus accomplished as the students incorporate academic literacy into their pre-existing discourse community memberships.

In the area of identity, research findings suggest that the use of a genre/constructive pedagogy allows for student assumption of subject positions that otherwise would not be available. This provides alternative avenues for students to explore, grow and produce knowledge. These are necessary characteristics for membership in the target (academic) discourse community.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In 1997 I returned to Piedmont College, a college established for students with Learning Disabilities, after a year of intensive study at the University of Massachusetts. Although I didn't realize it at the time, I was entering my final years at a job that had become comfortable and understandable; it was home. I had already been at Piedmont for over eight years at this point. I had established myself as having considerable expertise in remedial reading, mid-level administration, and presentation. A casual observer would think that upon my return, I would be poised to assume a larger leadership role in this institution, one which would draw upon my institutional expertise and upon my new graduate school status as "nearly ABD."

In reality, just the opposite occurred. Gradually, as I continued work in graduate school, I found myself in positions at Piedmont that seemed marginalized. Co-workers, especially those in positions of pedagogical authority, found things I said to be confusing. Once I even got e-mail from my department head saying she was not willing to, "spend time in the department discussing vague, nebulous ideas that make people understandably frustrated, uncomfortable and confused."

How is it possible that ideas and perspectives can so dramatically affect people? I was sure that my studies and experience with struggling literacy learners were leading me

to something, but, with all the positioning and investment in pedagogy at Piedmont, I was unsure what that something was. I was left to myself to sort it all out.

This dissertation is the story of one teacher who through opportunity and luck found himself at a unique position. It was as if my study and my life experiences brought me to the doorstep of an intriguing understanding of literacy development, and I was literally teetering at the doorstep. While it would be nice to suggest the sirens of each world were luring me, I felt more like an aging Wendy confronting Peter Pan. The world of academia, like aging, is not exactly welcoming; and similar to the world of Peter Pan, Piedmont's insistence upon established curricula was no longer a possibility for me. It was forcing me to see myself as somewhat of an outsider.

This in no way suggests that I held the moral high ground with my now estranged co-workers. Years of struggle establishing a groundbreaking school that purports to nearly guarantee success while holding students with LD accountable to high standards had made many administrators understandably proud. Additionally, the school rightfully prided itself upon innovation in remediating students.

Out of this turmoil in my professional life comes this dissertation research. It was developed almost simultaneously with my class, which is the site of the research. It was developed in an attempt to please both the worlds of Piedmont and the current constructivist research in literacy that I studied at the University of Massachusetts. Hopefully, I believe, I can draw upon the best of both. As I look back upon those years now, I can see a teacher desperate to please his parent institution, an institution that had paid a substantial part of his graduate education, but also remain true to pedagogical

ideals. Graduate study had afforded me a perspective that I could not turn away from. For me, there would be no "turning away at the doorstep."

Statement of Problem

Over the course of the last thirty years, the number of students labeled "learning disabled" has increased at a tremendous rate. In 1977 there were fewer than 800,000 students identified with Learning Disabilities. By 1990 over two million school-aged children had acquired this label (Lerner, 1993). This increase has resulted in a dramatic increase of adults at the college level who consider themselves "learning disabled."

These students have an "academic history." Many of them have been "remediated," or processed through Learning Disabilities (LD) programs in primary and secondary schools. They are in essence the products of a form of instruction; they represent the result of Learning Disabilities pedagogy. Increasingly, researchers have been paying attention to the processes by which these remedial students are taught academic literacy. Inherent in the Learning Disabilities "paradigm" are assumptions about literacy, about ability, and about power which have profound impact upon these students.

The focus of this dissertation research is the challenge "Learning Disabled labeled" or LDL (Luna, 1997) students face when they enroll in college. These students are seeking membership in what can be called the academic discourse community. Membership in this community is seen as successful participation in the reading and writing practices used in college. In this research I studied what happens when the

literacy instruction approach advocated by Australian Systemic Functional Linguistics (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993), is used with Learning Disabled labeled (LDL) students. This approach is commonly called a "genre approach." The students in question are enrolled in a "Reading and Study Skills" class at Piedmont College. Piedmont College (PMC) is a post-secondary education institution specializing in LDL students. I will introduce the research project and provide a brief summary of the process and procedure I followed.

As a practitioner who has been involved in the instruction of LDL students for over ten years and as a researcher who has been afforded the opportunity to research the literature surrounding the differing paradigms of literacy acquisition, I see a problem. Many times I encountered students who struggled with literacy but, for one reason or another, failed to succeed using the standard methodology offered by LD experts. Other times I encountered methodology which, if the current constructions of the Learning Disabilities field are to be believed, should fail to teach Learning Disabled labeled students. Yet, many times these "outside" methodologies were greatly effective. Furthermore, students who succeed at Piedmont often are not the ones who "followed the procedures." Successful students taken as a group seemed to have almost nothing in common. They possessed a multitude of diagnostic profiles, of reading levels, and of literacy ability. There was, however, one thing they did have in common: an attitude towards academics that defied all remedial training. These successful students simply felt that they belonged in an academic community and nothing would prevent them from participating.

These encounters with anomalies in Learning Disabilities teaching have left me puzzled. They have led me to question some of the basic assumptions made by the L.D.

paradigm and to pursue a research project that would provide greater understanding about issues concerned with the acquisition of academic literacy. I had been taught at Piedmont that literacy was a discrete set of skills that were taught sequentially. The anomalies I encountered while teaching at Piedmont made me wonder if there were alternative explanations that would provide insight into how to better teach these students. My graduate studies gave me a direction to search for these answers.

On one level, this dissertation research is an attempt to study questions surrounding the differing paradigms' constructions of literacy. What is each of the educational paradigms associated with literacy acquisition and how does each construct literacy? What is each paradigms' definition of who is and who is not academically literate? What is each of the paradigms' pedagogical approaches for helping students become academically literate? And, what issues of student identity are related to these approaches? These questions serve to inform my inquiry into the process of acquiring academic literacy by Learning Disabled labeled students. On another level, this research is simply an attempt by one teacher to better understand how best to meet the needs of his students.

Research Questions

Research questions used for this study attempt to see what happens when pedagogy inspired by a social constructivist view of literacy and literacy instruction is used with LDL students.

What happens when a genre-based curriculum is used with Learning Disabled Labeled students in a study skills class?

1. How are these LDL students and their instructor constructing literacy in this genre based study skills class?

    What literacy practices are being enacted within this class?

    What do the students and the instructor talk about in terms of how they construct literacy?

2. How are these LDL students constructing their identities in this genre-based study skills class?

    What subject positions do students take up and what discourses do they draw upon in their writing and talking?

To introduce this research, I will need to explain several concepts. First, I will explain the current state of research in Learning Disabilities/literacy acquisition. This field, I will explain, is dominated by major "paradigms" that dramatically influence opinions and pedagogy. After this overview I will then introduce social constructivism and the issues of membership and literacy. These concepts are central to my construction of this research. Then, I will introduce the concept of genre instruction and its possible role in the instruction of LDL students.

Learning Disabilities

Learning Disabilities is a diverse independent discourse community within education; it has a history that extends back decades (Torgesen, 1998). In the beginning, this community was based upon a medical approach in its understanding of learning differences. While the extreme medical explanation of Learning Disabilities has eroded

with time, parts of the orientation still extend to today and exist in the various constituencies within this community.

Modern organization of this discourse community was established in the early 1960's under the direction of Samuel Kirk. Because of the groundbreaking work of Kirk, Learning Disabilities has a cognitive and linguistic orientation in its understanding of learning. This orientation has been systematically incorporated into federal law. Known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) this federal law is intended to aid the development of "individualized educational programs for children with disabilities" (Torgesen, 1998).

The first assumption of this LD community is that literacy is made up of discernible skills. Examples of these literacy skills range from decoding skills, such as the ability to remember sound symbol relationships, to higher level composition skills, such as the ability to write using thesis and main ideas. These literacy skills are hierarchical, and must be sequenced to ensure success. Furthermore, literacy itself is a "normal" state of being. People naturally possess more and more literacy skills as they grow. Disruption or absence of significant skills is demonstrative of a possible disability. This absence is considered a learning disability when there is not a discernible emotional, social, or cultural alternative explanation for what is causing the lag in literacy development. When an intelligent student, in the absence of cultural, social, or emotional interruptions, still possesses a lack of proficiency with literacy, then a learning disability is suspected. It is then a discrepancy between expected proficiency and actual performance.

Literacy, then, is proficiency with the skills of literacy. Within this paradigm students who achieve what is considered literacy are proficient with the rules of literacy. Furthermore, academic literacy is seen as somewhat conflated with literacy in general. Both are seen as the same thing (McWhorter, 1995).

Once a learning disability is suspected, this community makes several assumptions in the procedures directed at the student. The first stems from the original medical model orientation of the discipline; it is the belief that this disability can be diagnosed and, with proper planning, remediated. It is the belief of this community that because of the plasticity of the brain, it is possible to establish the absent literacy abilities. This construction presents itself as the popular cognitive computer model of learning. This "information processing model" stresses the "three channels" of information input and output. These processes are frequently labeled the "receptive, processing and expressive" channels of literacy processing and resemble the input, processing and output processes of a computer. The LD discourse community members believe that "remediation" or correction of faulty channels of literacy processing will enable students with many common forms of LD to overcome the disability. With the proper training, they can gain literacy skills.

Pedagogy within the LD community is extensive. It ranges from Orton-Gillingham bottom to top methodology that attempts to teach by first emphasizing alphabet skills and building literacy from there, to various adaptations of the information-processing model (Reid & Hresko, 1981). Pedagogy inspired by the information processing model seeks to use alternative channels such as touch or sight to augment the "constrained" pathways. Consistent in this model is pedagogy that employs skill

acquisition as the basic tool of instruction. Metacognition, or the "ability to take control and direction of one's own thinking processes" (Lerner, 1993, p. 204-205), figures prominently as the goal for this pedagogy.

> Efficient learners have efficient metacognitive skills, but students with learning disabilities tend to lack the ability to direct their own learning. However, when they do learn the metacognitive strategies used by efficient learners, they can apply them in many situations (Lerner, 1993, p. 205).

Metacognition is then the ability to control of one's own thinking processes. People are exhibiting this aspect of thinking when they, "do something to help themselves learn and remember (p. 205)." The implication of this is that clarity concerning one's own thinking results in a clearer understanding of the information confronting them, and, in the implementation of problem solving strategies. Metacognition, and its association with problem solving, become an important goal of instruction for this reason.

Social Constructivism

Central to this dissertation research is a social constructivist understanding of literacy and membership. Social constructivism is a belief system which emphasizes that many of the things commonly considered facts by a community are actually social constructs emerging from that culture's belief systems. These belief systems are important when applied to the concept of literacy. A social constructivist conception of literacy is that the standards commonly thought of as normal are in fact constructs of that culture. "Normal" literacy is a social construction.

It is my belief that literacy is meaningful participation in a discourse community. It is the ability of a participant to use the discourse of that culture to demonstrate membership (Geisler 1994). For example, in order for a person to be a member in a "literate" community, he/she would have to be accepted by the community and feel that their participation in the discourse of that community was meaningful (Gee, 1990; Swales, 1990).

James Gee notes that there is a particular form of discourse which surrounds schooling (1990, xviii). This discourse is one of the multiple discourses which school children face as they grow. Increasingly, membership in this academic community requires what is considered proficiency with academic literacy practices. These practices are the reading and writing strategies valued by this community.

For the purposes of this dissertation study, a social constructivist definition of literacy and of mobility, or success in joining that community, is critical. It is an assumption of this study that students can successfully join discordant discourse communities (Swales, 1990).

Membership, Literacy and Identity

An important aspect of constructivist belief related to literacy is that self-identity, the ability to see "self" in the interaction of reader and text, is an important part of reading. Proficient readers are able to "interrogate" text that they encounter (Geisler, 1994). This means that proficient readers have a well-developed sense of self that allows them to evaluate text. Meaning for the proficient reader is arrived at through an

interaction with the text. If meaning is not arrived at, then the cause is not immediately thought to be the fault of the reader alone. On the contrary, proficient readers will endeavor to see the breakdown as coming from a multitude of sources rather than from the reader alone. Placing blame solely upon the reader could result in the construction of student identity that inhibits participation in academic culture.

It is a central assumption of this dissertation study that traditional LD pedagogical practices create identity issues that students must cope with as they engage in the process of joining academic discourse communities. These identity issues, or issues concerning how the student will socialize into the desired discourse community, are explored in this study.

My assumption is that this phenomenon of identity deeply influences student ability to "produce knowledge" (Geisler, 1994). Production of knowledge is the ability of members to see themselves as sanctioned to create what is seen as viable, valued information. In this context, the production of knowledge is the student's ability to have meaningful input into both written and verbal dialog. The dialog must be understood by both parties to be relevant, original and the result of a "synthesis" or original creation of an idea. Production of knowledge is an essential part of membership in academic discourse communities.

For social constructivist researchers and practitioners absence of literacy does not necessarily reveal disability. For these research/practitioners literacy is the reading and writing practice of any particular discourse community. It is not simply a "normal" or invisible way of processing language. Furthermore, academic literacy, or the reading and writing practices of the academy, are not neutral literacy practices. Instead, they are the

numerous literacy practices of privilege and power. Under this understanding of literacy, it is problematic to simply assume that students who have difficulty with academic literacy suffer from a form of disability. Instead, constructivist arguments tend to stress that academic literacy is not "normal" and that practitioners should be sensitive to alternative understandings of student behavior. Careful consideration of these questions leads researchers to look outside of a skills orientation and to seek explanations concerned with notions of membership and identity. Commonly, these "cultural mismatch" theories are used to construct a very different model of literacy acquisition (Chiseri-Strater, 1991; Dipardo, 1990; Elbow, 1991). Because constructions of the source of difficulty with academic literacy differ in the social constructivist paradigm, pedagogy also differs.

Instruction within this paradigm consists of providing meaningful literacy tasks that the student understands. Absent is prescriptive teaching that decontextualizes reading and writing from meaning and meaning-making. While generally not as numerous as cognitive approaches in the LD literature, constructivist alternatives do exist. Examples of these can be found in a wide variety of curricula. Phinney (1988) offers an example of pedagogy that strives to teach literacy while avoiding labeling. Her pedagogy stresses comprehension strategies that emphasize confidence and enjoyment of reading. Rhodes and Dudley-Marling (1988) offer a similar program of instruction.

Usually consistent in constructivist pedagogy is an understanding of the Vygotskyian "zone of proximal development" and "scaffolding" which serves to inform instruction. Teachers strive to provide meaningful curriculum that encourages the students to grow into academic literacy practice. Moll (1990) points out that there are

three characteristics that are usually present in the zone. These are first finding for the student the "proximal level" or standard of work that is challenging but not too difficult. Secondly, teachers attempt to provide a level of assistance (scaffolding) that is goal orientated. And third, teachers work to foster independent performance of the intended activity. Emphasized in the constructivist use of this concept is reliance upon meaningful activities and not basic skills. An important aspect of this practice is that the learning must be "authentic" and a "whole activity" (p. 8).

Genre

Within this constructivist paradigm is a new form of literacy instruction. This genre approach stresses pedagogy that "connects the various forms text takes with variations in social purpose" (Cope & Kalantzis, p. 7). For the purposes of this dissertation study genre instruction is the teaching of the genre of academic literacy with all of the social and political implications intact. As with most social constructivist pedagogy, this form of instruction is based upon the idea that literacy instruction is not politically neutral. In essence, genre instruction in academic literacy is an attempt to teach literacy by making apparent the literacy practices of the academic community. Genre instruction assumes no static hierarchy of literacy. It does not seek to teach skills in isolation. Instead, it teaches community membership by making apparent the rules that govern membership. It is an assumption of this community that these rules of membership can be explicitly taught.

There are currently few examples of explicit use of genre instruction with a LDL population. This absence has an impact upon this dissertation study. Accordingly, classroom procedures used by my class will be the result of my own interpretation of this pedagogical approach. My instruction in literacy will stress the short expository/argumentative essay, its deconstruction, and creation. It still requires specific teaching of "study skills" but makes clear that these strategies/practices are the "rules of the road" for the desired "target" community the students are trying to join. Emphasis will be placed upon the augmentative style of discourse frequently used in many parts of the academy. While it is clear that there is a great diversity of discourse practice used in academic literacy (Herrington, 1981; Herrington & Marcia, 2000), it is one of the major assumptions of this research and of the genre approach that it is possible to directly teach the rules of participating in academic literacy while still respecting the diversity of this discourse community.

Critically important in this teaching is the belief that it is a matter of choice to join this academic literacy community. Genre pedagogy agrees that academic literacy is not normal. Its absence necessitates no remediation. Rather, if students find themselves lacking membership in a particular discourse area, and they perceive that they wish to join, then they can work to learn the values and literacy of this community.

This conception is very different from the "broken computer model" of the LD community (Lerner, 1993; Poplin, 1988a; 1988b). This shift is significant for this study. LD pedagogy, with its inherent "broken" construction of students, makes membership in discourse communities less likely. If a person's ability to meaningfully participate in an "academic" discourse community is related to whether they are sanctioned by that

community to produce knowledge, general pedagogical practices in LD often remove production of knowledge from student control and place it with the instructor (Dudley-Marling and Searle, 1995, p. v-ix). Metacognition, or the ability to monitor one's own thinking, does not alter this relationship. Learning Disabilities practice, with its emphasis upon metacognition, at times disempowers students and creates an atmosphere that reduces the importance of self in relation to text (cf.., Dudley-Marling & Searle, 1995; Heshsius, 1982; Poplin 1988b; Sleeter, 1987). Because of this, students are left believing that meaning is imbedded only in text, and that their understanding of it is always flawed unless otherwise sanctioned by the teacher (Poplin, 1988b). Because of the generally understood LD construction of student inability to fully understand or produce text, all information produced by students must be first "sanctioned" by instructors for it to be considered worthy.

Rationale and Benefits of the Study

The field of Learning Disabilities is at a crossroads. Its high rate of growth and general maturing has made it increasingly subject to external criticism. In the past few years there have been many types of criticisms of the field: "reductionist" (Poplin, 1988a), "mechanistic" (Heshusius, 1982), general deficiencies of the discipline (Coles, 1987; Kavale and Forness, 1985) and the political nature of the "deficit model" approach in LD (Dudley-Marling and Dippo, 1995; Sleeter, 1987; Algozzine and Ysseldyke, 1986). All generally take issue with the central "medical model" orientation that is at the root of Learning Disabilities pedagogy.

Unfortunately, the nature of the discipline makes acceptance or even acknowledgment of these criticisms infrequent (Coles, 1987; Dudley-Marling and Dippo, 1995). The origin of the field, and its resulting philosophical orientation, mandates a type of belief system. As a discipline, L D developed its world view from a "medical model," which relies predominantly upon traditional positivist research methodology. This structure leaves both practitioner and researcher in a highly specific world view or paradigm.

Complicating this is the fact that much of the research in literacy acquisition is not occurring in this paradigm. Contemporary literacy studies and composition theory both stress more constructivist and at times more critical viewpoints. This "dual system" situation is perilous for the student who is having difficulty in achieving academic literacy. Should this student embark on the road of Learning Disabilities, by obtaining a diagnosis to help gain accommodations under section 504? Are there only benefits to being declared Learning Disabled, or are there deeper implications that become apparent only when the student subjects him/her self to the community standards and instructional techniques of this community?

Constructivist/critical researchers have been sounding the alarm. They stress that even though there is usually an absence of clear neurological impairment in diagnosis, students are nevertheless encouraged to construct themselves as impaired. They stress that even though there might be additional factors of cultural mismatch or poor prior training, students nonetheless are encouraged to view literacy as neutral. They stress that even though students' desire might be to equate the college degree they seek with monetary gain, they nonetheless are taught to see "possession" of academic literacy as

"normal" and its absence as evidence of neurological "problems" (Carrier, 1979; Coles, 1987; Dudley-Marling and Dippo, 1995; Dudley-Marling and Searle, 1995, Heshusius, 1982; Poplin, 1988a 1988b; Sleeter, 1987). These beliefs result in remedial students with few options in their pursuit of higher education.

If given a clear choice between the deterministic world of Learning Disabilities and alternative methods of achieving literacy, this process might not be problematic. This, unfortunately, is rarely the case. Students are not usually given a "choice" about being declared learning disabled. Once failure at academic literacy becomes a reality, then a host of agencies and discourses come into contact with the student.

This research is intended to add to the growing understanding of the situation experienced by lesser-prepared college students. Genre methodology provides a lens that illuminates the consequences of valuing the existing language that students bring to the academy, while still providing instruction of academic discourse. Exploration of these issues is valuable to the constructivist/critical paradigm for researchers, practitioners, and students.

Organization of the Dissertation

In this dissertation I will first present in Chapter 2 the background of this argument. This literature review will present relevant research in the fields of literacy and literacy acquisition, Learning Disabilities and genre theory. Next, in Chapter 3, I will present methodology and research issues. This chapter will explain the specific procedures used in this dissertation research and provide the necessary context of both

the research site and the researcher. Next, in Chapter 4, I will present the findings of my research in the area of literacy. Here I will discuss the constructions of literacy of the various constituencies impacting upon the class. In Chapter 5 I will present findings in the area of identity. Finally in Chapter 6, I will present my conclusions and note the implications of this research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Overview of the Section

In this chapter I will provide a review of the relevant research which effects this study. This research can be categorized into three areas. First, I will discuss social constructivist research surrounding the concept of literacy and academic literacy. This research is concerned with the study of academic discourse patterns and is focused upon the notion of discourse community as a basic unit from which community members derive meaning.

A second area of relevant research is the study of student academic failure and Learning Disabilities. As I will demonstrate, Learning Disabilities research, as a discourse community, has a developmental history that is highly important in the understanding of the various sanctioned pedagogical practices currently popular in LD instruction. This information is presented as background information to contextualize the possible contributions of genre theory.

The third area of research significant in this study is genre theory and its relation to the study of academic literacy. I will present the current state of this new movement in education research. I will begin with academic literacy.

Social Constructivist Perspectives on Academic Literacy and Student Identity

In this section I discuss relevant constructivist research in the areas of academic literacy focusing upon contributions that serve to establish academic literacy as a separate discourse community. This research area is located mostly within composition studies (Anderson, et. al., 1990; Dipardo, 1990; Elbow, 1991; Ivanic, 1994). As a way to focus this discussion, I will explore this research area using the questions developed in my introduction: how do social constructivist researchers and practitioners construct literacy? how do they define who is and who is not academically literate? what pedagogical procedures are related to social constructivist practice? and finally, how does the concept of student identity relate to these issues?

Literacy and the Construction of Academic Literacy

A constructivist understanding of literacy and academic literacy frames this study. This dissertation study follows the social constructivist theories of Cook-Gumperz (1986), Gee (1990), Lytle (1991), and Street (1993). From this perspective, it becomes clear that literacy can be viewed as more than a set of discrete skills, but instead as social practice (Gee, 1990; Lytle, 1991). Kenneth Bruffee notes in *College English*:

> A social constructivist position in any discipline assumes that entities we normally call reality, knowledge, thought, facts, texts, selves, and so on are constructs generated by communities of like-minded peers. Social construction understands reality, knowledge, thought, facts, texts selves, and so on as community-generated and community –maintained linguistic entities—or more broadly speaking, symbolic entities-that define or "constitute" the communities that generate them…. (p. 774)

This view stands in contrast to more traditional views of literacy that stress a hierarchical skills construction of literacy (Reid & Hresko, 1981).

A review of the literature reveals the growth of the concept of literacy as social construction. Cook-Gumperz (1986) demonstrates that literacy has had various definitions over time. This changing definition of literacy is significant. It demonstrates that possession of literacy, or the act of being literate, is not static. Definitions of what literacy is and who gets it have changed over time. Researchers such as Scribner and Cole (1981) have added to this understanding by demonstrating that multiple literacies exist in the same people. This research has added to the shift in focus in literacy studies from seeing literacy as a set of decontextualized skills to social practices (Street, 1991, 1993).

Initial research following in the tradition of Scribner and Cole has tended to emphasize the importance of the indigenous language or literacy practices that students bring to the academy (Heath, 1982; Philips, 1970). This research is important in demonstrating that preexisting literacies are sometimes seen in conflict with the development of academic literacies. With time, this research area has incorporated a more power conscious view (Delpit, 1988) of the relationship between indigenous literacy and academic literacy.

Increasingly, "academic literacy" has been viewed as different from what might be called literacy (Bloome, Harris, & Ludlum, 1991; Lytle, 1991; Street, 1995). Recent research in academic literacy has resulted in a view that increasingly questions the "normalcy" of academic literacy as viewed by contemporary society. In Gee's definition of literacy (1990), literacy is the ability to participate effectively in a discourse

community. As Cook-Gumperz stresses, literacy becomes in this model the product of what is acquired only in school. Gee argues strongly that teaching literacy in school is "apprenticing students to dominant, school-based social practices" (p. 67). Literacy acquisition in school is the process of replicating the dominant view of what it is to be literate.

This view of "multiple" literacies grows more complex as issues of power grow in importance in the work of Sleeter (1987), Skrtic (1995), and Dudley-Marling and Dippo (1995). In the work of these researchers, it becomes clear that what is considered literacy by the dominant culture is more valued than other forms of literacy. Dudley-Marling and Dippo note how this situation is unacceptable. They write:

> So who benefits from this dominant discourse around schooling? A significant body of research indicates that the prime beneficiaries are those who enter schools with a certain kind of "cultural capital" and who accumulate conventionally value skills and knowledge in highly competitive environments - that is white, able-bodied, middle-and upper class men.... (p. 412).

Academic literacy can be seen as a specific form of privileged literacy that holds implications for LDL students. It follows then that specific pedagogical procedures could be established assuming that a clear definition of academic literacy could be made.

While there is currently not a consensus of opinion of the definition of academic literacy, the increasing frequency of scholarship employing this concept has made examination of this concept warranted. In recent years, researchers have increasingly examined the issues surrounding conceptions of academic literacy (Bartholomae, 1986; Bizzel, 1988; Chiseri-Strater, 1991; Delpit, 1988; Geisler, 1994; Shaughnessy, 1977). These studies have defined academic literacy as a specific form of literacy practiced

within the academic discourse community. This literacy is concerned with the "creation and transformation" (Geisler, 1994) of academic knowledge.

The specific structure of this form of discourse is explained by Elbow (1991) as "stylistic conventions or surface features" and not as "deep structural organization." Here, he is alluding to the presence of "mapping" or "signposting" where the text's structure is revealed and the reader is alerted to the writer's intention. Likewise, non-academic texts may use this convention as well. Elbow notes how non-academic text may only have to imply its intent and structure, but that this structure nevertheless can exist.

Clark & Ivanic (1997) discuss academic writing through the relationship of control of meaning. In Clark & Ivanic's definition, the characteristic most prominent in text analysis is the amount of control or power the reader has. In the case of academic texts, the intent of the writer is to be "considerate." This then results in predictable patterns within the text. Clark & Ivanic argue that the media or press has similar structural considerations. In Both Elbow and Clark & Ivanic stress structural components in academic writing that have to do with textual features specific to that genre. These textual features exist not only in academic texts but also, perhaps to a lesser degree, in media texts (Clark & Ivanic, 1997).

I am defining academic discourse community as a discourse community within which the dominant discourse is academic. In this I mean that academic literacy, or the patterned meaning making activities of the academy, have a recognizable pattern within a broad range of possibilities. In my class I emphasized the most general patterns of

academic literacy. I then discussed how these general conventions lead to more explicit conventions of specific academic communities within the academy.

For the purposes of this study, constructing academic literacy as an expository style will be derived from several sources. Insight into this definition is offered by Thompson (1994), Love (1991), Gosden (1992), Geisler (1994), Hyland (1990), Clark & Ivanic, (1997) and Elbow (1991). These theorists suggest that argumentative or expository essays possess a pattern. This pattern in text is evidenced by the presence of a central assertion with a linear structure of support followed by a conclusion. These theorists also suggest that it is possible to teach this pattern of "valued" literacy.

A key concept in this study is the concept of academic discourse community. A considerable amount of the study of academic literacy has focused upon the process students follow in becoming academically literate as demonstrated by membership in academic discourse communities. This concept has emerged as a focus in social constructivist understanding of how communities determine who is and who is not literate.

Defining Academic Discourse Community, Literacy Membership and Academic Literacy

This dissertation study is informed by the concept of discourse community as defined by several authors (Bartholomae, 1986; Hymes, 1974; Swales, 1990). Swales defines discourse communities as "…sociorhetorical networks that form in order to work towards sets of common goals" (p.9). These goals range in purpose and stand somewhat distinct from other social constructivist definitions of discourse community. For Swales,

issues of assimilation are secondary to simple involvement in the community. He offers a definition based upon six characteristics that stress discourse communities' relation to agreed upon discursive goals. These six characteristics are: 1) has agreed upon public goals; 2) has mechanism of intercommunication; 3) has participatory mechanism to provide information and feedback; 4) uses and possesses one or more genres in the communicative furtherance of its aims; 5) in addition to genre it also has acquired some specific lexis; 6) has a threshold level of members with a suitable degree of relevant content and expertise (pp. 24-27).

Street (1995) continues the development of this concept when he discusses the "notion of multiple literacies...of dominant literacies in opposition to 'marginalized' literacies" (p. 135). He also notes that:

> Literacy is not a given, a simple set of technical skills necessary for a range of educational competencies, as much of the earlier literature would suggest. Literacy practices are neither neutral nor simply a matter of educational concern: They are varied and contentious and imbued with ideology. They are different literacies related to different social and cultural contexts rather than a single literacy that is the same everywhere (p. 143).

Street then goes on to question how a particular form of literacy has grown to be the dominant form of literacy in contemporary society. Critical in this discussion is the association of literacy as social practices within the communities that use them.

David Bartholomae (1986) applies the concept of discourse emerging from community to the academic world. He explains the concept of academic discourse community when he says:

> Every time a student sits down to write for us, he has to invent the university for the occasion - invent the university, that is or a branch of

> it...to try on the peculiar ways of knowing, selecting, evaluating, reporting, concluding, and arguing that define the discourse of our community.
>
> Students have to appropriate (or be appropriated by) a specialized discourse, and they have to do this as though they were easily and comfortably one with their audience as though they were members of the academy, or assembling and mimicking its language, finding some compromise between idiosyncrasy, a personal history, and the requirements of conversation, the history of a discipline. They must learn to speak our language (p. 4).

The existence of discourse community establishes "normalcy" of a discourse pattern. Academic literacy is the normalized discourse pattern of the academy. It is the accepted way that reading, writing, and speaking occur in this community. This conceptualization of discourse community has implications for this dissertation study and for the instruction of students who have been labeled Learning Disabled. With the use of this concept, literacy instruction shifts from a literacy-neutral approach that tries to provide students with a "normal" level of literacy, to a discourse communities approach. A discourse communities approach allows for instruction that encourages student entry into academic literacy discourse communities.

As students seek entry into these communities, they must create for themselves an identity that provides membership. Authors such as Bizzell (1988), Elbow (1991), Ivanic (1994) and Rose (1989) seek to reveal connections between student identity and the process of becoming academically literate. Ivanic (Barton & Ivanic, 1991) argues for more awareness of the power that language has over individuals thus enabling them to resist or accommodate to it. Bizzell, Elbow, and Rose suggest that the academy must pay more attention to the identity and literacy already present in entry level students. These studies argue that students who enter college are in effect seeking literacy that will result in changes in identity. This realization mandates an increased understanding of the

stresses and pressures that the academy exerts upon new members. Chiseri-Strater (1991) furthers this argument by opposing what she characterized as, "the way that the academy excludes and marginalizes all students who do not fit into the mainstream of thinking, perceiving, and performing" (1991, xiii). She argued that the academy forces students to cope with the literacy demands placed upon them and diminishes the existing literacy practice each student arrives with.

Consistent in this area of research is a concern about the mismatch of the indigenous literacy of the entering student and the literacy demands made by the academy. Also present is concern for the success of students in their joining in new literacies. Lu (1991), in her critique of Mina Shaughnessy, argues strongly that teachers need to confront political implications of teaching basic writing and to move away from the literacy-neutral stand currently prevalent in composition instruction. This shift is necessary to enable the process of entry to be easier and equitable.

James Gee (1990) argues that there are two forms of discourse that students must master for membership. 'Discourse' with a capital 'D' is the "identity kit" of membership. It is the "saying (writing)-doing-being-valuing-believing" aspect of membership in a community. Discourse with a small 'd' are the literacy practices commonly associated with a community. Gee would argue that full membership is difficult to achieve for non-members. Researchers such as Swales, however, hold out the possibility that such membership is possible. Indeed, it might even be argued that LDL students lack only the *discourse* of academic literacy, or the ability to use effectively the stories, conversations, reports, and arguments that are used by the academic community. In many ways LDL students at Piedmont already possess partial membership, or the

Discourse of this discourse community, in Gee's conceptualization of community membership, because of their socio-economic and cultural background. Most PMC students are considered by faculty to be "privileged" and not disadvantaged socio-economically.

If literacy is a way of using a semiotic system (Clark & Ivanic, 1997), then academic literacy is the way of using a semiotic system within a particular discourse community (Swales, 1990). This form of literacy is the dominant school-based social practices that are imparted in the schooling process (Gee, p.67). It is the privileged discourse of the dominant culture.

Student Identity

Identity as a research construct emerges from several places. This study employs critical theory to emphasize that writers' identities are socially constructed through the possibilities of selfhood, the "subject-positions" that are available to them, and that this availability is socially constrained (Clark & Ivanic, 1997, p.136). Ivanic notes that subject positions, or the socially available possibilities for selfhood, are constructed by and within discourses and taken up by individuals through three paths: 1) the writer's life-history and sense of roots; 2) the writer's self identity of being a writer, including the authoritative sense employed in their own text; and 3) the discoursal self, or the writer's representation of self in text.

Traditionally in Learning Disabilities research identity issues were focused on attribution, or upon student beliefs about their ability and effort across situations

(Malicky & Norman, 1996; Saracoglu, Minden & Wilchesky, 1989; Wilczenski, 1992). Social constructivist research, on the other hand, has placed far more emphasis upon the writer's own construction of identity in the discoursal event. This identity is drawn not only from the life history of the writer, but also from the writers' sense of authority in their own text and how this authority is actually represented.

This difference has important implications for this study. If writers' identities are socially constructed, then I wish to see what happens when pedagogy designed to help develop membership is used. This dissertation research directly addresses questions concerning what identities students are assuming in this class, and how these competing identities affect and interact with the overall class constructions of literacy acquisition.

Ivanic and Clark expand upon this notion of academic discourse influencing student identity when they note, "Every word a writer writes contributes to the impression she is creating of herself to a reader. Writers are positioned, a multiple identity is constructed for them, not only through what they have said but also through the discourse they have participated in to say it" (1997). They emphasize that writers' identities are shaped by the "discourse choices" made as a writer in the creation of text. Writers are positioned by the "discourses they draw on as they write" (Ivanic, 1994, p.136). This positioning becomes then the process of writers becoming members of the academic discourse community. Basic writers, as they enter the world of academic literacy, are faced with a difficult task of establishing this new identity within the academic world.

Pedagogical Approaches

Constructivist pedagogical practices tend to stress process approaches, which focus upon discourse community membership (Bartholomae, 1986; Rose and Kiniry, 1998). This pattern of instruction is consistent with the general belief that identity or cultural mismatch issues generally account for student failure (Chiseri-Strater, 1991; Dipardo, 1990; Elbow, 1991). Emerging from this construction is pedagogy based on the "naturalistic and easy ways in which language learning occurs in varied sociocultural contexts" (Hicks, 1997, p. 459). Emphasis is placed upon meaning and meaning making in an attempt to make literacy acquisition a holistic process (Goodman, 1987).

There are essentially three categories of social constructivist pedagogy (Weisenberg, 1999). It can be argued that pedagogy influenced by social constructivist theory is either dialogic, modeling, or critical. Dialogic emphasizes teaching that uses a communicative exchange of information. Modeling consists of pedagogy that uses a pattern of instruction that explicitly reveals the intended product. Critical pedagogy is pedagogy that emphasizes the power dynamics of the literacy being taught. While multiple categories can be seen in many authors, it is nonetheless possible to generally divide the field in this way. The use of genre pedagogy is significant in that it is an approach that uses all three.

The genre inspired pedagogy used for this dissertation uses these three components. First, this research pedagogy stresses written and spoken dialogic interaction. Students are encouraged to dialog and express opinion exhibiting surface characteristics of academic literacy. Secondly, this pattern of interaction is constantly

modeled both by student-to-student dialog, but also by teacher-to-student dialog. Finally, the notion of power, agency and constructions of success are included increasingly in this exchange. In this way, class procedures follow social constructivist pedagogy.

While many studies reviewed for this section focus upon marginalized students or "remedial students" (Bizzell, 1988; Elbow, 1991; Ivanic, 1994; and Rose, 1989), few expressly discuss students who have been labeled Learning Disabled. Few also express the structure or function of membership within the community for these LDL students. This neglect has profound implications for this study. An assumption of this study is that in the direct instruction of literacy within literate discourse communities, patterned behavior is necessary to ensure that the individual is perceived as a member. In the case of academic literacy, or many other communities for that matter, it is an assertion of this study that "production of knowledge" is the process by which membership/identity is established and maintained. Production of knowledge is the patterned behavior valued in academic discourse communities (Geisler, 1994).

Summary

The social constructivist perspective allows the establishment of academic literacy as a separate discourse community. This perspective also provides a definition of literacy and of identity enabling evaluation the literacy acquisition process. Without this perspective, literacy becomes a neutral conveyor of information. With this perspective,

however, literacy becomes the membership criteria necessary for students to join literacy communities.

Research in Student Academic Failure/Learning Disabilities

In this section I will survey relevant research involved in the exploration of the phenomenon of student academic failure. This research, as I hope to show, is displayed across several discernible "paradigms" within the general LD discourse community. Examination of each of these paradigms is important. Each continues to exert influence upon practitioners and each continues to influence the ongoing dialog concerning literacy and acquisition of literacy. After this brief historical overview, I will examine these paradigms by evaluating them in terms of how each constructs literacy, how each determines who is and who is not literate, what pedagogical approaches are used, and how this affects student identity.

Historical Overview

The modern field of Learning Disabilities developed with the pioneering work of Alfred Strauss and Heinz Werner (Strauss & Lehtinen-Rogan 1947; Werner & Strauss 1940). Following the work of Dr. Kurt Goldstein with brain-damaged soldiers from World War I, Strauss and Werner sought to apply his findings to brain-damaged children (Haring & Bateman, 1977). Their aim was to determine whether or not the same

"psychological symptoms and behaviors found in brain-injured adults occurred with children" (Haring & Bateman, 1977, p. 21).

A dramatic shift toward cognitivism occurred in Learning Disabilities in the 1960's. S. A. Kirk (1963) solidifies a change in emphasis of the discipline from the medical model's underlying causes of learning disabilities to the cognitive model's observable behaviors of the student. Completion of this shift away from the strict neurological explanation is significant for several reasons. It demonstrates that emphasis now will be upon the behaviors of the individual in a learning or information processing model sense.

Kirk and the researchers that follow him are collectively thought of as the "cognitive school" of Learning Disabilities. This school becomes the backbone of the learning disabilities movement. With the work of these researchers, the notion that learning disabilities are caused by brain injury is gradually replaced by a "perceptually handicapped" explanation (Spear-Swerling & Sternberg, 1996, p. 35).

Central in this paradigm is the desire for accurate diagnostic understanding of the learner and a planned prescriptive procedure to "remediate" the specific nature of the disability. From this construct emerges the popular computer metaphor of learning. In this "information processing" metaphor the learner is likened to a computer (Lerner, 1993) which has three categories of processing. These are: receptive, or the processes the learner uses to receive sensory information; processing, or the actual cognitive work the learner uses to comprehend; and expressive, or the mechanisms by which the learner communicates the learning. The cognitive model seeks to "diagnose" the channels of

processing that are weak and strong. Then, depending upon the teacher's opinion on methodology, the instruction will either seek to strengthen the weak channels or "bypass" them by allowing the learner to receive and express the information through the strong channels (Lerner).

The third perspective to develop in Learning Disabilities was the construct-cognitivists. This group is different from both the medical model and the cognitivists in several respects. This paradigm reflects more diverse educational research. In this group more emphasis is placed on social aspects of the learning situation. Students who do not do well in school because of a learning disability miss developmental opportunities that further increase the speed of learning (Stanovich, 1986). When a learning disability interferes with learning, the impact is not only in the specific LD area but also in the long-term developmental potential of the student. This shift within the cognitive paradigm produces two distinct types of cognitivism. One branch remains closer to the medical model; the other branch is closer to social constructivism.

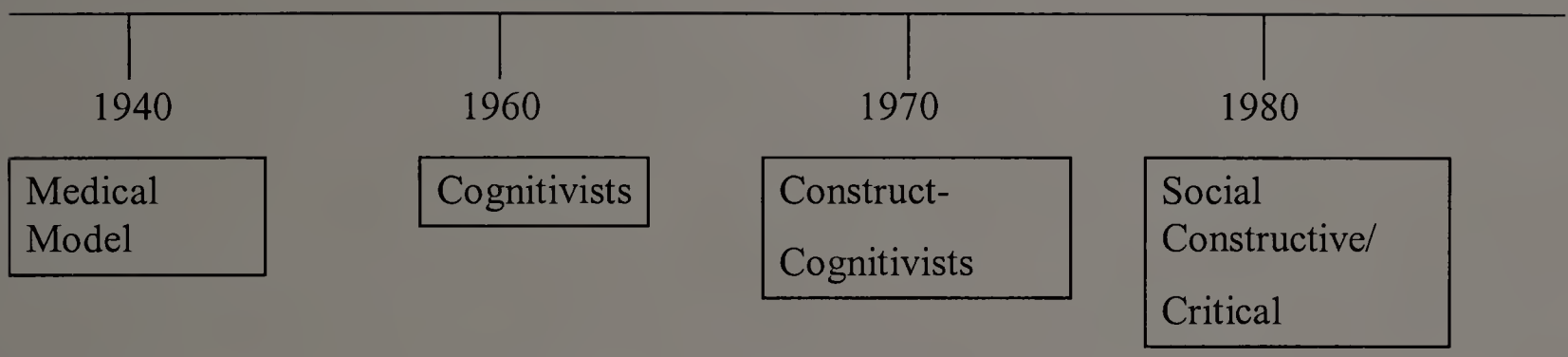
The final perspective to develop was the "social constructive model." Social constructivist research in academic failure represents a true "paradigm shift." Its orientation is fundamentally different than the other approaches presented. In the previous world views, emphasis was placed on the neurological or cognitive aspects of a single individual. The social constructivist view, on the other hand, seeks to study the social connection or cultural implication of any learning situation. There has been no definitive study made of the influence of this movement on learning disabilities.

This movement in Learning Disabilities has only been active for the past 30 years.

It helped foster a great change in methodology away from phonetic, bottom to top approaches, toward top to bottom, or holistic methods. Inclusive in this change was an increasing respect for indigenous languages and culturally marginalized people. It became clear in this research that the dominant culture did not have a monopoly of linguistic truth and that marginalized groups had literacy which was just a rich as the dominant group.

An evaluation of social constructivist authors reveals that the central issues that unites them is the perception of what is a disability and what is a difference (Apple, 1996; Street, 1993; Poplin 1988b; Dudley-Marling & Dippo, 1995). Learning disabilities can be seen as a continuum that proceeds from a medical orientation to a cognitive orientation to a constructivist one. In each change the responsibility or blame for the "disability" is increasingly placed upon the social "construct" of the situation. A social constructivist perspective on learning disabilities is to first think of it as a product of the culture around it. That is, it is seen not as a reality in itself. Instead it is viewed as a construct that is mutually agreed upon by all concerned. (See table 1.)

Table 1: Learning Disabilities Continuum



Literacy and Learning Disabilities

The field of learning disabilities has increasingly been looking towards the issue of literacy development since its inception. This shift has been a gradual one and proceeds from the medical orientation that was prominent when research began. LD, in many ways, did not look at literacy at all at the beginning. The initial orientation of LD was based on the notion that learning disabilities were neurological in origin.

"Treatment" for this disability was to get at the underlying cause of the impairment and to "remediate" it. An example of this approach is Frostig who conceived of Learning disabilities as a visual perception disorder. Frostig's position was that "visual perception development" was the underlying cause of reading failure. This visual deficit becomes the root cause of later related literacy difficulties as the student ages. Using Frostig's perspective, remediation consists of treating the underlying cause, in this case the visual tracking and perception of the student, to increase reading proficiency (Haring & Bateman, 1977).

Almost immediately it became apparent that this form of treatment was ineffective. The use of underlying skills as a method of remediation did not lead to increased cognitive gain (Cole, 1987). Researchers in the field of LD sought alternative means to explain and remediate the "disability" and to increase literacy ability in the students.

Cognitive techniques for literacy acquisition constitute a shift in the LD paradigm. This shift is consistent with increased emphasis upon literacy while still retaining ties to the older medical model. Under this new model, teaching students with learning disabilities consisted of teaching them the behaviors associated with "real" learning, or literacy, rather than the teaching of underlying skills. Furthermore, this shift demonstrated that Learning Disabilities had to move away from the medical model by stressing that LD is a linguistic disability with "neurological implications" (Reid & Hresko, 1981). Inability to read was now thought of as caused by a student's inability to "decode" rather than by an inability to "track" along a page correctly. Because of this

difference, student instruction changed from a physical training sequence to one where the student was trained in areas where his/her language process "broke down."

This orientation has been refined with the introduction of developmental issues to literacy acquisition. Stanovich, in his paper *Matthew Effects In Reading: Some Consequences of Individual Differences in the Acquisition of Reading* (1986), represents this position by forcefully arguing that developmental issues affect the outcome of academic achievement. He states that the "rich get richer and the poor get poorer," referring to developmental impact in the process of literacy acquisition. With this statement, Stanovich acknowledges that innate "wiring" of the neurological structures of the brain cannot alone explain developmental lags in learners. It emphasizes that literacy skill acquisition is a primary concern of teachers and that early detection of impairment can help to reduce the effect of absent literacy skills.

Literacy Membership and Pedagogy in Learning Disabilities

Because of this construction of literacy as "possession of literacy skills," schooled literacy demands their possession. The process of diagnosis and remediation of skills has been the dominant underlying assumption in Learning Disabilities (Haring & Bateman 1977; Reid & Hresko 1981). Practitioners in this paradigm seek to establish what literacy skills exist in the student and then to "fill in the gaps" that become apparent after testing. Literacy as skills possession, as defined by a sanctioning agent, is an important part of the justification of LD pedagogy.

Pedagogies influenced by the Learning Disabilities or cognitive paradigm are numerous. Mostly associated with the "skill and drill" pattern of instruction, these curricula stress reliance upon information processing theory. Ranging from decoding skills at the most basic level to college level reading skills, these curricula share the "computer model" understanding of literacy processing (Learner 1993; Reid & Hresko, 1981). Inherent in this understanding is that skills should be taught to students using a multitude of "channels" and reinforced to ensure processing from short-term to long-term memory. The concept of metacognition or "the ability to facilitate learning by taking control and directing one's own thinking process" (Learner 1993, p. 205), is often seen as the goal of this type of instruction. Learners who achieve metacognition have gained control of their thinking patterns and can employ learning strategies to best accomplish a task.

Pedagogy coming from this perspective seeks to isolate the appropriate skill and to remediate any deficiency. Examples of this form of instruction can be found in the numerous study skills manuals that exist as texts for remedial college courses. The act of reading is often taught as a series of skills consisting of skimming, finding main ideas, finding supporting details, separating fact and opinion, summarizing and note-taking (Blake, 1973; Fleming, 1996; McWhorter, 1995; Pauk, 1984). Implicit in this approach is that the skills of literacy are best learned when isolated and reduced to the smallest possible size. Piedmont College pedagogical practices follow in this tradition by emphasizing five areas of skill remediation: composition, oral reading, study skills, oral communication, spelling, and comprehension (Piedmont College Training Material,

1998). Teaching practice is encouraged to "micro-unit" material to the smallest possible unit, and to repeat the lesson until "automatization" is achieved.

Student Identity and Learning Disabilities

Most of the identity issues associated with the LD paradigm are based upon notions of self-esteem and acceptance (Malicky & Norman, 1996; Saracoglu, Minden & Wilchesky, 1989; Wilczenski, 1992). Houck, Engelhare and Geller (1989) expand upon this research by stressing academic self-perception. The findings of these studies reveal that students who are labeled LD cite commonalties of difficulties that are encountered in the academic world.

Lewandowski and Arcangelo (1994) take this research a step further by analyzing social adjustment and self-concept of both LD and non-LD students as they make the transition from traditional educational environments to the workplace. The surprising findings of this study reveal that self-concept is essentially the same for both non-LD and LD students. The authors seem troubled by this finding. They note that this finding may be in part the result of the absence of an "academic self-concept subscale," which presumably would have had more success in separating populations involved in the study. An alternative explanation is given by Porter (1994) who offers an "interaction-specific" rather than a "person-specific" explanation of disability. He is suggesting that the location of disability within the context of the interaction relieves the student from accepting the globalization of the disability. The "disability" is thereby located in only academic areas. When the student is relieved of the burden of being physically located in

an academic environment, the issue of self-esteem becomes statistically irrelevant when compared to the student's non-LD peers.

Additionally, remediation techniques which stress information-processing or traditional Learning Disability pedagogy fail to incorporate the non-neutrality of the literacy that is being taught and its possible impact upon identity. Seldom do practitioners in LD use power and access to power discourses in their teaching. It is necessary to look outside the LD discourse community to explore such issues. Delpit (1988) comes closest to this orientation with her paper concerning marginalized people and the need to teach access. She notes:

> ...Students must be taught the codes needed to participate fully in the mainstream of American life, not by being forced to attend to hollow, inane, decontextualixed subskills, but rather within the context of meaningful communicative endeavors; that they must be allowed the resource of the teacher's expert knowledge, while being helped to acknowledge their own "expertness" as well; and that even while students are; assisted in learning the culture of power, they must also be helped to learn about the arbitrariness of those codes and about the power relationships they represent (p. 296).

What she is suggesting in this article relates to marginalized people of color who have traditionally been excluded from access to the literacy of the academy. It can, however, also be applied to other, non-specific groups that have also been excluded from access to this literacy. In the case of LDL students, it is my belief that academic failure is not explained by the nature of the culture that they come from, but rather from the nature of the culture which they wish to join. LD students do not come from an identifiable "culture" which could account for a cultural mismatch. They do, however, share one characteristic: the desire to join a cultural group identified by their use of a particular form of valued literacy. LDL students, and many students in general, believe that

possession of this academic literacy will be the key to open doors, gain access to power, and be empowered in contemporary society (Clark & Ivanic, 1997).

Summary

A clear understanding of the field of learning disabilities provides a context necessary for the experimental use of genre. Each of the paradigms discussed have profound impact upon the discipline today. Each has influence upon definitions of literacy and of identity. Furthermore, each also has influence upon approaches to pedagogy. This review of the research associated with student failure and Learning Disabilities provides valuable insight for this research study based upon genre theory.

Genre Theory

In the broadest view, genre theory is an approach to literacy that emphasizes the similarity between texts. It is a recognition that genre is an expression of a discourse community. According to Cope and Kalantzis, "'genre' is a term used in literacy pedagogy to connect the different forms texts take with variations in social purpose" (1993, p.7). They later note, "...genres are social processes. Texts are patterned in reasonably predictable ways according to patterns of social interaction in a particular culture" (p.7).

Over the past 15 years there has been much interest in this research. Currently, there are two poles of activity around genre. They consist of Australian systemic

functional linguistics, and two North American movements, North American rhetoric studies and studies in English for Specific Purposes (Hyon, 1996, p. 694). Placing genre in context with the literacy debates is itself controversial. Genre theorists developed their theories in part because of a perceived failure of "progressive" pedagogy (Cope and Kalantzis, 1993). It is clear, however, in evaluating philosophy and origins of genre that it is a development of the social constructivist world view (Cope and Kalantzis, 1993; Hicks, 1997; Hyon, 1996). For these reasons, genre's construction of literacy is based on the notion of community membership (Swales, 1990). Swales points out that members of discourse communities possess a "familiarity with the particular genres" that are used in communication. Possession of these genres constitutes what membership is for these discourse communities (p. 9).

English for Specific Purposes

North American rhetoric studies and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) have taken a descriptive and ethnographic approach to genre. As an example, ESP studies generally describe what specific genres look like. In her study of geology introductory textbooks, Love (1991) notes that while there are differences in the two texts studied, "many similarities between the two texts remain" (pp. 101-102). She finds that both texts contain what she considers to be a "process-product cycle" (p. 102). This method of presentation exists with some variation, however. Her evaluation reveals a variation in "formal schema" while "content schema" remains constant in the texts (p.101). She

notes, "If students are helped to perceive this model, they are likely to experience fewer problems with reading geology texts" (p.102).

Similarly, Susan Thompson in her study of lecture introductions (1994) found that genre analysis can also be applied to the oral discourse of classroom instruction. In this study, Thompson evaluated 18 lecture introductions from a range of disciplines. She found that while there are variations within the genre, there are indeed characteristics that can aid students. These structures include the lecturer "setting up the lecture framework" and "putting the topic in context" (pp. 178-179). These characteristics are present with "variations." But, Thompson notes that these variations are predictable and valuable for students to know. She notes, " Despite the problems of dealing with considerable variations in the structure of lecture introductions, it appears that genre-based studies can offer valuable insights and tools for the teaching of academic listening skills" (p. 184).

In addition to her evaluation of the lecture, Thompson also raised an interesting comparison to other aspects of "academic literacy," including article introductions and textbook introductions. She notes, "Lecture introductions under investigation display a set of shared features which may usefully be compared and contrasted with related academic genres such as research article introductions and conference paper introductions" (p. 180). Thus, she helps define the common surface characteristics of the entire academic discourse community.

In a similar study, Gosden reviewed genre patterns in scientific research articles (1992). In this study Gosden reviewed 36 research articles to determine genre characteristics. He found that there are three types of grammatical categories and nine functional categories within the general category of the scientific research article. He

notes that "findings clearly show dynamic patterns which can be predicted on the basis of the rhetorical goals inherent in each section of RA [research article] discourse" (p. 221). Consistent in the ESP approach is a pattern of description that limits itself to what a genre looks like. This research is valuable for the purpose of this study because these descriptions are of academic genres, and they provide a starting point for this study in the teaching of academic literacy.

North American Rhetoric Studies

Similarly, evaluation of the North American rhetoric studies reveals that less scholarship has been focused on this area, thus providing fewer pedagogical suggestions. Unlike ESP, rhetoric studies describe the social purposes behind the genre through ethnographic investigation (Hyon, pp. 695-700).

The North American rhetoric studies stress the "dynamic quality of genres" (Freedman and Medway, 1994). They also emphasize an ethnographic description with little critical structure (p.11). Revealed in this research area is that the North American rhetoric studies intentionally cast doubts on the pedagogical applications of genre theory. Instead, detailed descriptions of discourse are supplied with the intention of understanding the community which temporarily uses that discourse. For that reason, relatively few studies in this area are focused upon the academic setting. Those that are tend to stress the negative application issues involved in using genre as a teaching tool.

The most significant researcher in this area is Aviva Freedman (Freedman, 1993; Freedman and Medway, 1994). Freedman strongly questions the ability of teachers to

use genre in a useful way to instruct students. Freedman sets out to "interrogate the educational assumptions of the [genre] movement: that explicit teaching of genre can in fact lead to its acquisition" (Freedman and Medway, 1994, p.193). She cites as evidence her study of 7,500 schoolchildren in grades 5, 8, and 12. She notes that students seemed to acquire the needed literacy techniques in school without explicit teaching. "Clearly, explicit teaching is not necessary for the acquisition of even very sophisticated school genres" (p. 196). She goes on to note that there are very real dangers of teaching the rules of a genre when a teacher may not totally understand the complete genre.

She does, however, qualify this statement with a comment helpful for this study. She notes that genre, "...may prove useful for these students whose learning styles are appropriate, but only when such discussions are presented while students are engaged in authentic reading and writing tasks, involving the targeted genre" (p. 205). This dissertation study is consistent with Freedman's qualification concerning the use of genre. LDL students, as a category, share the characteristic of academic failure. Applications of genre pedagogy in general education, however, is left to the Australian Systemic Functional Linguistics.

Australian Systemic Functional Linguistics

Australian Systemic Functional Linguistics differs from the other genre groups because there is a stronger emphasis upon power. Much of this research was written as an "educational experiment" (Cope and Kalantzis, 1993, p.1) aimed at helping

marginalized peoples. This research group also offers a specific pedagogical procedure to teach genre in the class (Hyon, 1996, pp. 695-700). As Hyon notes:

> The Australian concern for teaching the discourse conventions of school and workplace genres is often framed in ideological terms, with genre-based instruction described as a tool for empowering students with linguistic resources for social success (p 701).

Australian Systemic Functional Linguistics was started as an independent project by Mary Kalantzis and Bill Cope titled the Social Literacy Project. Its intended audience was working class students and migrant workers. The writing of M.A.K. Halliday and other prominent theorists influenced the Social Literacy Project (Cope and Kalantzis, 1993).

While debate of approach exists within this community, researchers in this area can be seen as emphasizing several features of genre. First, they stress that genre is a "category that describes the relation of the social purpose of text to language structure. It follows that in learning literacy, students need to analyze critically the different social purposes that form patterns of regularity in language--the whys and hows of textual conventionality..."(Cope and Kalantzis, 1993, p2). This emphasis upon the social purpose of literacy and the pedagogical imperatives of the movement set this group of scholars apart. Cope and Kalantzis confirm this connection when they note, "Students from historically marginalized groups, however, need explicit teaching more than students who seem destined for a comfortable ride into the genres of cultures of power" (p. 8).

This emphasis can be seen in several researchers associated with Australian Systemic Functional Linguistics and their view of the explicit instruction of grammar.

Gunther Kress argues to use genre for "understanding what texts do and how they do it" (p. 23). He is seeking the social and cultural significance of how grammar makes meaning. Cope and Kalantzis explain this emphasis when they say:

> The injunction to link social purpose to text structure leads to an understanding of language very different from that of traditional grammar. Starting with the question of purpose, analysis of the text proceeds by looking at the structure of the whole text. Only then does it account for the progress of the whole text in terms of what happens in sentences and clauses. Unlike traditional grammar which starts with words as 'parts of speech' and rarely gets further than dissecting clauses and sentences, genre analysis is concerned primarily with whole texts and their social functions. Sentence and clause analysis is only performed in order to explain the workings of the whole text and how it realizes its social purpose (p. 10).

J.R. Martin and Joan Rothery (1993) expand this discussion of grammar by examining the grammatical features of a report. In this they argue for a functional approach to grammar rather than a traditional one. They also argue that the approach to grammar instruction must be made contextual to the social purpose of the text.

Pedagogy from Australian Systemic Functional Linguistics takes several forms. Primarily, it positions itself as being part of a tradition of progressive pedagogy. Its philosophical roots and its emphasis on the cultural importance in meaning making align it with constructivist theorists in education. It can also be seen as a response to the call to return to "basics" that has been shouted by educational reformers who have become concerned with falling test scores and other "evidence" that children have poorly developed grammar and spelling skills (Cope and Kalantzis, 1993, p.7).

Callaghan, Knapp and Nobel (1993) describe the curriculum that is used in a genre approach in a school project titled the "Language and Social Power Project for the Metropolitan East Region Disadvantaged Schools Program." In this program, a sequence

of negotiated modeling, joint negotiation and independent production of text was presented. The students and teachers proceeded through a sequence of reading and writing activities that worked to more closely approximate the intended genre. (pp.180-181).

The first stage is modeling. Callaghan, Knapp and Nobel describe this process by noting:

> A key insight of genre theory is that language occurs in a social context and that it is structured according to the purposes it serves in a particular context and according to the social relations entailed by that activity. .... Social context is one possible starting point when teaching students a new genre. A number of model texts can be used to draw out the significant features of the genre.... (Callaghan, Knapp and Nobel, 1993, p 181)

In the second stage, a joint negotiation of text is developed when the class group starts "writing in generic text types." The authors note that, "this involves a period of preparation with the close guidance of the teacher who provides support and 'scaffolding'." In this stage information is gathered, text is analyzed and discussed. Next, the teacher takes on the role of "scribe" and helps turn the students ideas' into an "approximation of the genre" (p. 181).

The final stage is "independent construction" of text by the students. It involves "...a number of steps: from preparation through drafting, conferencing, editing and evaluating; to the creative manipulation of the genre and its possible uses" (p. 182).

Summary

One current debate between the North American and the Australian genre theorists stems from a disagreement about the usefulness of teaching genre based upon student identity. The current argument can be conceptualized as a debate between genre as social action and Freedman's position that explicit teaching is not desirable or even possible. This argument is useful for this study. Criticisms of the genre approach take issue with the advisability of teaching a genre to students who probably will acquire its use, and therefore its membership identity, anyway. Within this dialog, however, Freedman herself notes that genre instruction may be useful in what she calls her "restricted hypothesis." She notes: " However, the Restricted Hypothesis allows that, under certain conditions and for some learners, explicit teaching [genre] may enhance learning" (Freedman, 1993, p. 226). Freedman is not specific about which populations and which conditions she is referring to. She is clear, however, that some students could benefit from the study of discourse patterns of desired communities.

Summary of Literature Review

The development of social constructivist learning theory and Learning Disabilities has progressed to a point where there is almost a "dual" system of evaluation of literacy issues. On one side, the discourse of Learning Disabilities emphasizes a disability-centered, reductionistic, medical model explanation of academic failure. On the other

side, constructivist and critical explanations of academic failure emphasize cultural or discourse community mismatch.

While it might be possible or even desirable for these world views to co-exist, recent revelations about diagnostic ambiguity, dominant discourse bias, general failure of the Learning Disabilities community to provide a "scientific" basis for the origin of the disability, and possible negative impact of LD pedagogy upon many LDL students make it necessary for these discordant communities to communicate. As Cobb (1994) suggests, it is necessary for these communities to inform each other and provide a structure that seeks to answer the individual needs of the students while still being sensitive to the power issues implicit in the situation. The presence of a diagnosis of learning disabilities does not necessarily eliminate issues of empowerment, power, and identity. Furthermore, evaluation of these issues may go far in explaining the nature of failure to acquire academic literacy.

Use of genre-inspired pedagogy is desirable after review of the relevant research. Genre seems to fill an important spot in the debate surrounding choice of curriculum and philosophical approach to Learning Disabilities. Genre-inspired pedagogy seems to satisfy the skill-oriented requirements of the medical and cognitive approaches to LD instruction while still remaining compatible with constructivist concerns for literacy and empowerment. This study intends to evaluate the process of applying genre literacy instruction in this academic context.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH ISSUES

Introduction

In this chapter I explore issues related to methodology and research. I first present my own perspective and explain the importance of the constructive frame I adopt to conduct this research. Next I present my research questions and an overview of the design including my role. Finally, I present the physical context of the study: my research class with the relevant sections of the curriculum, my principle informants, and the limitations of conducting research at PMC.

In the Frame: Myself as Teacher and Participant

In this section I will discuss my personal history as a teacher. As a participant observer, I believe that my impact upon the findings of this study is significant, and because of my dual role in this research project, I must account for the impact that I have in the research. I first started teaching at Piedmont College in the fall of 1989. At that time I was a disillusioned public school teacher who had recently decided to call it quits after my fourth year of teaching. This period consisted of experience in three schools and one foreign country. I believed that I had a fairly good idea about what education was and my role in it. Possibly because of my very positive experience in teaching in the Colegio Americano in Guayaquil, Ecuador, and possibly because of my frustration with public education, by the late 80's I felt that I had had enough.

It now seems that through an odd set of circumstances I came to Piedmont. I had let the school year begin without me. It was now late September, and I was not teaching, and still looking for work. It was then that I spotted an ad in the local paper seeking substitute teachers. Thinking that this could be an easy way to earn money while I continued to look for alternative employment, I applied for the job. Its biggest draw for me was the age of the students which, to my war-weary public school eyes, seemed to suggest ease and time for me to research alternatives.

One of my first tasks in tutorial was to "diagnose" my student and to fill out the "diagnostic checklist." This checklist became my guiding star. I can remember working with my first supervisor and asking him why we were instructed to find two errors per item on the diagnostic checklist. His answer was that I must seek to change my style of teaching from public school. My supervisors at PMC taught me that I was now to think of myself as a diagnostic teacher. My teaching from now on would be diagnostic teaching.

At the time I was thrilled. This was a new world of teaching that was revealing the "nuts and bolts" of learning and I could not get enough. I can still see myself looking for patterns in the errors that my students would produce. I would, in times where I could not find adequate evidence of error, manufacture tasks that would provide the needed evidence. These patterns, I was told, demonstrated linguistic patterns that the dyslexic brain was not "wired" for. With the direction of my supervisor I would create tasks for the students to do that would "remediate" the error. I was confident that with practice, "automatization" would occur in my students. We could establish neural pathways in the

brain (because of the plasticity of the brain I was told) that would enable the student to independently accomplish the assigned tasks.

I found myself applying to teach classes at Piedmont. I would like to think that I chose the Reading and Study Skills Department because of my quest to discover more about literacy acquisition. I believe that this is not the case. Instead I chose to teach in this department because it appeared closest to my familiar world of public school social studies. It was a fortunate choice. It forced me to confront the literacy puzzle and launched me towards a horizon that I could not at that time see.

Becoming an experienced teacher in the reading and study skills department gave me additional ammunition to use in my quest to solve the literacy puzzle. This department, more than any other in the school, faced the questions of reading and writing for LDL students head on. My training in this department was helped by my training in the Tutorial Department. The Tutorial Department, because of the extensive nature of the diagnostic checklist, covered the study skills "zone," so in many ways my training was just more of the same thing.

Training in reading and study skills was a very exciting time for me. I was thrilled to be in on what seemed to be the ground floor of this exciting new field. As a department, our mission became to quantify and unify all of the exciting developments that were happening institutionally. I can remember faculty members discussing their experimentation with various techniques that at the time seemed to help unlock our students' potential. One faculty member became quite enthusiastic about mnemonics. He developed a series of acronyms for the various skill areas that he taught to his class.

"The professor is kind and warm," for example, was a sentence developed to help students remember the proper sequence in note revision.

Another teacher developed elaborate visual aids to help students. The institution then bought piles of Tinker Toys and various other types of manipulatives to represent the structure of language. Many teachers spent hours of curriculum development seeking ways to incorporate manipulatives into their class. There were several notable successes in using these manipulatives with students. One student was even video-taped for use in conferences. She presented a moving and compelling picture of a young woman who finally succeeded in scripting essays with the help of Tinker Toys. The Tinker Toys allowed her to finally see how her essays could be structured together. Eventually, she claimed that she would start her writing process with the use of Tinker Toys.

Central to Piedmont pedagogy at that time was the model of literacy that represented much of Learning Disabilities pedagogy. This model was the computer model of language processing (Lerner, 1993; Poplin 1988a; Reid, 1981). This powerful model of information and literacy processing was the root of much of the curriculum development in the early years. If people were likened to computers, then the strong and weak channels of processing were accessible to remediation. It was only a matter of accurately diagnosing the students to determine which channels were in need of remediation.

The first doubts of the validity of this model came to me as I was working in tutorial. In my work with students who were experiencing difficulty with reading, I would carefully monitor their oral reading. At this time, Piedmont employed a form of error analysis. Many times in tutorial I encountered students who did not exhibit clear

signs of dyslexia, even though their diagnosis said that was what they had. I was taught that as a diagnostic teacher, I should seek the patterns in the decoding of the students and note the patterns. This was the problem. In most circumstances I could not see any pattern in the decoding of the students. Even though I would manufacture text that would highlight areas of apparent weakness, I seldom could find a clear error pattern. Since dyslexia was a neurological condition, I was taught that patterns could be found. I was instructed to count the patterns and note them on the diagnostic checklist. Unfortunately, all I often could see was what I later called sloppy decoding. Students would exhibit one pattern of errors one day and another the next.

Another observation that caused me to have doubts about the validity of the model was that students who were coming to Piedmont seemed to have conflicting diagnoses and what we at the time called co-morbidity. Piedmont was founded on the notion that students with learning disabilities were a distinct and separate group that could be culled out of the pool of academic failure. At the time, admissions criteria were based upon a notion of exclusion which stipulated that students would be accepted only in the absence of other mitigating factors such as emotional difficulties, depression, drug abuse, or social deprivation (unpublished Piedmont document 1988).

Yet, it was clear to me that many of the students I faced every day were dealing with a host of complicating factors. In my second year of teaching at PMC one of my students was forced to leave the institution because of the onset of schizophrenia. This was only one of the three students I encountered with this disorder. Another time I taught a student who was born without a completely functioning endocrine system necessitating his daily doses of various hormones including testosterone. To me the separation of

Learning Disabilities from the other conflicting problems was impossible. Time and time again I would encounter students who seemed to be dealing with deep emotional issues. It was not uncommon to encounter students who seemed to be suffering from depression. It was also not uncommon to see these very same students diagnosed with ADHD.

Even with my doubts, I sought to immerse myself in the discourse of Learning Disabilities. All difficulties I encountered I attributed to my own inability. My skills as a diagnostic teacher were only just developing, and I would soon be able to discern the missing patterns and also be able to make sense of the seemingly contradictory diagnostic information that was available.

Learning Disabilities from a Constructive Perspective

My basic aim in starting my career in graduate study in education was to improve my understanding of Learning Disabilities and to make myself a more valued member of my college. I could not have anticipated that my work in graduate school would eventually take me away from the LD world view and present me with an alternative way of viewing literacy.

I started graduate study in 1993. Working full-time at Piedmont, I progressed at a slow pace and was able to complete my course work in about five years. During this time I became more and more immersed in a view of literacy which was outside of the world view of Learning Disabilities. This world view was at first mystifying. It seemed that what I had been taught in the LD paradigm was not the only way to view literacy.

Indeed, it seemed at times that I had fallen through the looking glass and all that once had been held to be true was now false.

The graduate program that I joined had what I was told was a "whole language" approach to the literacy debate. At the time, during my application process, I felt that this was probably not very important. My quest was to study literacy; one approach over another was fine with me. After all, I was at that time a co-department head, and felt that I already had much knowledge about reading and writing. My intent was to establish my already "extensive" credentials.

While enrolled in the Reading and Writing Program, I encountered a vastly different way to view literacy. I was essentially confronted with a constructivist interpretation. My surface response was to accept it. Because of the vast number of things in a busy life including wife, children, and work, I was able to maintain almost a split personality. At Piedmont, I was successful in maintaining my professional work that mandated an understanding of literacy that was cognitive. At the university, I was immersed in a constructivist interpretation of literacy. For a time, both were able to exist simultaneously.

My ability to keep balanced both worlds of literacy was based upon one assumption: that there was a physical barrier that separated the worlds of LD instruction and general instruction, and this barrier was the diagnosis of learning disabilities. I reasoned that once a person has a diagnosis, then a different pattern of instructional behavior was needed.

I believe that the existence of this barrier was present in the minds of many of my co-workers at Piedmont. Many times I encountered instructors who would engage in

practices which would only be tried with a population LDL. For instance, at one time supervisors seemed to incorporate a Kubler-Ross (1969) interpretation to their work. There are many times I can remember advisors instructing students that they must "accept their LD" and that they must not "deny" their condition. This was done with clear intent. These students must accept and then work with their disability. If not, there would be no progress.

I think that my early years as a teacher in Learning Disabilities was marked with a zeal that I didn't think I could have for an institution. I can remember that some teachers jokingly made the suggestion we could reform the Republican Party with the techniques that we were using. The effects upon the students seemed at the time to be clear. We felt students were successfully being remediated at PMC. Piedmont was a boot camp of the mind and we were re-training minds to overcome a deficiency with "neurological implications."

My ability to maintain my dual existence at Piedmont ended when I advanced in my program to the point where I began to do my own research. In 1995 I began an ethnographic inquiry of tutorials. It seems now clear now in hindsight that it was with this research that my two worlds of literacy began to grow into one.

Unified Literacy Instruction

My initial belief entering into an ethnography at Piedmont was that there was a sort of consensus in methodology. In an examination of the official training materials and in the PMC teacher evaluation procedure, it became clear that Piedmont favors an

orthodox cognitive approach. An examination of tutorial transcripts, however, revealed that there was a rich variety of methodologies present. Not only did teachers employ what I then called "bottom to top" approaches but also included many contextualized approaches. Furthermore, it was clear that much more than the simple repetition of skills was going on. I suggested in this study that more advanced students were given the opportunity to engage in more meaningful dialog. It was only with the more "remedial" students that traditional skill and drill methodologies were employed. Because of this, there seemed to be an almost covert nature to some teaching practices employed only when the diagnostic checklist was already satisfied.

Closer examination with the tools of ethnography revealed that teachers were making meaningful and deep connections with their more advanced students that had as much to do with student progress as any cognitive technique did. The conclusion of this paper opened doors for me and allowed me to see that there was the possibility of multiple interpretations for failure to acquire academic literacy.

The personal changes that occurred because of my studies are important in this discussion. It is clear to me that as a result of my graduate work I have changed in my own construction of my students. In the beginning of my training my strong desire to fit in manifested in an educational world view that was consistent with the information-processing model. I thought of my students as broken computers. This view persisted until about midway through my dissertation process. Even now, I must admit, there are times when I find myself "spiraling back" to this prior way of thinking. This thinking can be described as follows. Since the student has a flawed ability to process information, I, as a professional, must teach him/her the proper skills of doing school.

These proper ways are invisible for me, but for this student are simply absent. The reason for the absence of these skills is due to a learning disability because testing and my own eyes tell me that. In fact, just talking to them confirms the disability because so often they are able to clearly articulate what is wrong with them.

Since clear understanding of the deficits in the student is necessary to make progress, I must accurately diagnose. Starting at "ground zero" or at the point where a skill breaks down, was an often-repeated training phrase. But I shouldn't feel any sympathy for my student because it is possible for teachers, diagnostic teachers, to teach to this disability and to remediate the student. In fact our practices are "proven" effective.

It was this last phrase about our practices being "proven" effective that I think really got me as a new PMC instructor. I guess I have always wanted to be on the cutting edge of something. Now suddenly, here I was; I wanted to believe that we were onto something. Learning Disabilities seemed new and I was a new teacher.

I cannot remember the actual day that my construction of my students shifted. I am too much a cynic to think that there must have been an epiphany or some form of sudden transformation. Instead, the chasm that my mind was working under gradually began to close.

In 1998 I commenced a pilot genre study in preparation for doing this dissertation project. In this genre pilot study I taught two reading and study skill classes the same curriculum I used for this dissertation research. This project was concluded in December of 1998. During the 1998 pilot study I began what turned out to be the final shift of my

class towards a genre-inspired curriculum. In this class I actively sought to change the self-constructions of my students.

Research Questions

Instruction of students who have been labeled Learning Disabled can take many forms. Usually, an understanding of information processing models or a cognitive orientation in pedagogical approach inspires these differing pedagogical approaches. This study is an attempt to see what happens when pedagogy inspired by a social constructivist view of literacy and literacy instruction is used with this population.

Genre-based instruction is most commonly thought of as being part of the constructivist tradition in literacy instruction. It focuses upon the explicit teaching of the discourse forms used by various discourse communities in society. In this dissertation research academic literacy is the "target" literacy group that instruction will be geared towards. This dissertation study is about what happens when pedagogy influenced by genre philosophy is used with LDL students who are seeking acquisition of academic literacy.

What happens when a genre-based curriculum is used with Learning Disabled Labeled students in a study skills class?

1. How are these LDL students and their instructor constructing literacy in this genre based study skills class?

    What literacy practices are being enacted within this class?

    What do the students and the instructor talk about in terms of how they construct literacy?

2. How are these LDL students constructing their identities in this genre-based study skills class?

    What subject positions do students take up and what discourses do they draw upon in their writing and talking?

Examination of these questions provides several things. First, they serve to help reveal the competing tensions of identity, membership, and literacy for both teachers and students. Examination of these aspects of literacy development is important for remedial students and for students who have been labeled L D. Most research in this area stresses surface characteristics of literacy and of identity. Furthermore, these questions will help establish a research base for genre inspired research. While genre pedagogy has been applied to a multiple of groups (J.R. Martin and Joan Rothery, 1993; Callaghan, Knapp and Nobel, 1993; Love, 1991), rarely has it been applied to an LDL population.

Methodology: Research Methods, Access, Data Collection

This research study examines what happens when a genre-inspired pedagogy is used with LDL students. To accomplish this, I embarked upon a qualitative study using ethnographic elements (Spradley, 1980), taking advantage of my own participation within PMC culture. I triangulated data using artifacts, participant observation, case studies, transcribed student dialog, and Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995). These methods were taken in order to satisfy my research questions and I believe that I have succeeded. I chose to engage in qualitative research because of the nature of what I wanted to study and how I wanted to study it. I sought in this study to interpret the meaning of student behavior within a specific context. Because of my belief in the

socially constructed nature of literacy acquisition, it seemed most reasonable that a qualitative research perspective be taken to answer my questions.

The process of acquiring permission to do qualitative research at Piedmont is itself a story worth telling. This research employs elements that appear alien to many at PMC. Perhaps because of the nature of the institution, or perhaps because of the nature of LD, research at Piedmont became usually synonymous with quantitative inquiry.

Accordingly, and because of an active research committee, Piedmont has increasingly been reluctant to grant blanket approval for general research. The committee formed to oversee research projects at Piedmont was extremely reluctant to allow research. It was only after a prolonged struggle, culminating with a direct appeal to the president of the college, that final approval was given. The research site for which I was able to receive approval was my own class.

Due to the requirements of informed consent, I had my class scheduled with alternative placement options available. In this way, students who did not want to participate could feel free to leave and join another class at the start of the semester. Additionally, students who wished to remain in my class and not participate in the study were allowed to do that as well. Fortunately for this study, none of the students chose to leave the class and none chose not to participate.

Data Collection

There were several phases in the instruction of this class (see pp. 69-70 this chapter) necessitating different phases of data collection. As a participant observer, I

entered the research field and took the role of instructor in the class. From this position, I observed the ways students and I participated in the class and how we proceeded through the curriculum. This procedure enabled me to answer my first research question related to the student and instructor constructions of literacy. In the first ten weeks of the class students were instructed how to read and write in closer approximations to college-level literacy. Data from this section is predominately drawn from student-generated response papers, from my own observation log, and from artifacts.

In the last part of the class, teaching consisted of a "content section" directly looking at the development of LD pedagogy. The Reading and Study Skills Department mandates that each study skills class cover topics in LD. For the purposes of this research project, this content section consisted of a survey of the paradigms in LD pedagogy, culminating with an exploration of constructivist philosophy applied to LDL students. This section enabled students to use not only their increased literacy in an academic subject area, but also allowed them to critically assess parts of LD theory as it applied to them.

The following data tables outline the procedures followed to collect information for this dissertation. Table 2 provides the data collection method used for each constituency. Table 3 provides a chronological overview of the research process.

Table 2: Data Collection Table

RESEARCH AREA	DATA COLLECTION METHOD
Students/Class	Participant observation, audio-taped interviews, audio taped class discussions, writing samples
Class instructor	Participant observation, artifacts, research journal, audio-taped class discussions
Reading and Study Skills Department	Participant observation, interviews with department members, artifacts, training materials, workshop presentations
Piedmont College	Interviews with supervisory staff, participant observation, artifacts of training for new faculty, artifacts of admission and administration, placement process feedback forms
Field of Learning Disabilities	Literature review

Table 3: Research Table

	1995	**Sept-Oct 1998**	**Nov-Dec 1998**	**Jan-Mar 1999**	**Apr-June 1999**	**July 1999-May 2000**
Pilot Ethnography						
Pilot Genre Study						
Site Documents						
Teacher Journal						
Participant observation						
Student writing						
Audio-taped class discussions						
Faculty interviews						
Student Interviews						

Data Analysis

In this section I will discuss the primary methods of data analysis employed in this study: thematic analysis and critical discourse analysis. Each of these techniques contributes to a mapping of these students' experiences.

I divided my inquiry into two areas in order to explore my concerns as a researcher/practitioner. First, I sought to understand the constructions of literacy in a genre-inspired class. Here, I reveal how a group of students responded to a literacy development curriculum when this curriculum was embedded within a genre approach to academic literacy. For this section my primary data analysis technique is ethnographic (Spradley, 1980). My primary data in this section is student-generated text, transcribed class discussion and institutional and class artifacts. This form of qualitative analysis reveals individual, social, and cultural patterns of behavior surrounding the instruction and acquisition of academic literacy for these students.

To answer my second research question concerning identities, I implemented an examination of texts generated at the end of the class when the topic shifted to LD. Here, using student case studies, I first sorted for educational discourses evaluating what students said about who they were, what learning was for them, and who they are as learners. Then, using a form of Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995) I examined what students do or how students interact in class. Here the alternative pedagogical discourses used by students and the instructor were examined with their available subject positions. In using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), selected

transcripts were analyzed using "microanalysis." In microanalysis text is analyzed in reference to specified characteristics. These characteristics are then related to student and teacher constructions of identity. By evaluating the data surrounding identity using both of these methods, a picture of class members' identity is revealed.

Unit of analysis

I analyzed class discussions by creating transcripts using a two-step process. First, I made transcripts from audio-taped class sessions. I then sorted the transcriptions of class activities and divided them into message units. Message units are the minimal unit of discourse as divided using protocols developed by Green and Wallat (1981), Bloome and Egan-Robertson (1993) and Willett, Solsken, and Wilson Keenan (1996). For this study message units are the minimum unit of speech containing meaningful information in the context of the speech event. I finally analyzed the message units using the following categories. Table 4 provides the categories use for this research. Following this I will provide a sample discourse analysis to demonstrate the type of information obtained using this process.

Table 4: Categories Table

1.	**Line**	Indicates which text is referred to from transcript
2	**Participants**	Indicates the speaker and the intended addressee
3	**Form**	Indicates the general type of verbal statement

4	**Function**	Identifies the purpose of the message unit within the event
5	**Subject Position**	Relates specifically to how the speaker sets self in relation to other or to text in reference to pedagogical discourse
6	**Pedagogical Discourse**	Refers to the discourse concerning what students do. Includes the way students participate in interactions as indicated by subject position choice
7	**Educational Discourse**	Refers to the educational discourse that the speaker is using to explain or justify message unit

(Fairclough, 1992; Willett, Solsken, and Wilson Keenan, 1998).

Sample discourse analysis:

Teacher	1. So when is the difference a disability?
Nick	2. There may not be a ah, the, um lack of exertion of mental effort. 3. (Pause) you know what I'm talking about, 4. they're talking about like, some of the reversal errors, here. 5. Like they talk about these two kids, they show how they can have B and D, as reversal errors. (Papers shuffle) they're like those… yea that's true, 6. a lot of kids when they are younger they automatically do that. 7. You know it's like a simple error. 8. If the kids in like, fourth and fifth grade and he is still doing that shit, and he also has a lot of other things (laugh) going on with it. 9. I mean gee, there may be an issue. 10. They may not be seeing that stuff properly. 11. And if he's also seeing all kinds of other shapes, 12. and he gets his words jumbled, maybe he has trouble with like certain phonemes, decoding, certain things like that. 13. I mean, do you think he might have a disability? 14. There may be dyslexia there.

Participant	Line	Form	Function	Subject Position	Pedagogical Discourse	Educational Discourse
Teacher	1.	Question	Serves to seek student response	Facilitator	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
Nick	2.	Answer	Serves to answer teacher	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
	3.	Statement	Serves to continue idea	Participant		
	4.	Statement	""	""	Genre/Dialogic	Cognitive

	5.	“”	“”	“”	“”	“”
	6.	“”	“”	“”	“”	Constructive
	7.	“”	“”	“”	“”	
	8.	“”	“”	“”	“”	Cognitive
	9.	“”	“”	“”	“”	
	10.	“”	“”	“”	“”	
	11.	“”	“”	“”	“”	
	12.	“”	“”	“”	“”	
	13.	Question	Serves to request dialog	“”	“”	
	14.	Statement	“”	“”	“”	“”

This form of analysis serves to reveal patterns of discourse within the class. I was able to see using this lens that there were multiple negotiations and multiple constructions of literacy present. In this section of transcript Nick answers the question I raise concerning the difference between disability and difference. Nick can be seen in lines 4 and 5 borrowing from a cognitive educational discourse while using subject positions available in the genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse. Nick is able to participate in a conversation with the teacher using his own construction of what he believes to be true. This is often not the case in the L/D pedagogical discourse. In a L/D pedagogical discourse a very different dialogic pattern would be evident. As I will show, when participation in this discourse occurs students are limited in their responses. This pattern of subject position and discourse use reveals patterns of negotiation and of allegiance within the class.

Role

The role I played in this research project was that of participant observer/researcher. At the time of this research, I was an active member of this community teaching in the Reading and Study Skills Department. Over the course of my tenure at the college, I held many positions, including supervisor, department head, and

instructor. This knowledge base gave me a depth of understanding of the workings of this institution. As a researcher my role shifted dramatically from one who was solely participating, to one who was critically observing. This shift proved to be taxing for me. Being able to shift perspectives to critically assess what was going on within the institution, and most importantly, within my own class, required me to wear multiple hats while still maintaining my position within each of the roles I played. I believe that I have successfully managed balancing these roles.

The requirements of genre instruction also affected the role I played in the class. Unlike the LD construction of literacy that is skills-based, genre instruction suggests a more complex membership/identity focus (Cope and Kalantzis, 1993). Within genre instruction the role of the instructor is to explicitly teach the linguistic patterns which have historically accounted for membership within discourse communities. This teaching suggests that the teacher is able himself to fully know just what the requirements are (Freeman & Medway, 1994). Like any teacher, I could not ever fully know the requirements of membership in academic discourse communities. I could however, in my role as teacher, offer my experience and my view as to what I believe constitutes academic discourse community membership. Towards this end, my role in a genre-inspired class shifted toward mentor and "welcomer." My role in the class was to ensure that these students recognized the importance of membership in literacy-based discourse communities and that I, to the best of my ability, correctly identified key areas that denote membership. Through the course of participating in my class students were given literacy tasks that fostered or explicitly discussed issues of membership in academic literacy. Class discussion and course papers were explicitly taught to include issues of

power, agency, and constructions of success, modeling what I felt to be critical components of academic culture.

Context of the Study

In this section I will introduce Piedmont College as the site of this dissertation research. I will discuss relevant components of its organizational structure, and its principal constituencies.

An educational entrepreneur founded Piedmont College in 1985. This "founder" was the creator of Piedmont School and other "Piedmont-named" institutions designed to meet the needs of dyslexic students. Piedmont College, the last of the institutions founded, was designed to provide post-secondary education to students with LD.

Piedmont College presents a unique professional structure. Most of the faculty who work at Piedmont are practitioners who gained their expertise for working with students with LD at Piedmont. It is common for faculty members who are predominately trained at Piedmont to be promoted to department head in their second or third year. Often, deans are people who have been at the college a little more than five years.

Piedmont College/Precredit Classes

Each student arriving at Piedmont has a "psycho-educational" report indicating that the student has a learning disability. This fact alone makes Piedmont College unique. One of Piedmont's primary goals is to "remediate" these students to foster

growth that will allow them to succeed in general education environments. In addition to being a "Learning Disabilities" institution, Piedmont College is also an institution of higher education. It functions as an accredited two-year college offering a degree in liberal arts. At the time of this research, enrollment at the college was over 300 students. This number was divided almost evenly between the students enrolled in credit-granting classes, and those enrolled in classes that were "pre-credit." Although both groups were considered part of "the college," there was nevertheless a certain prestige and status granted to credit-level students. It was the generally recognized goal of all pre-credit students to eventually join Piedmont's credit program or some other college program.

The pre-credit program at Piedmont was an important part of the institution. It served not only as a "feeder" program from which the credit program drew, but also as a form of working laboratory which allowed faculty to develop curriculum specifically aimed at a disabled population. This innovative approach can be seen in the process that prospective students take as they join the student body.

Students who entered Piedmont were given a series of tests intended to establish the "strengths and weaknesses" of each student. Those enrolling who were not deemed sufficient in "skills" were given pre-credit classes. These pre-credit classes were designed to continue to diagnose the area of weakness and provide remediation opportunities. The classes were divided into English, reading and study skills, speech communications, social sciences, natural sciences, mathematics, humanities, and tutorial. Most students were required to take one English, one reading and study skills class and one tutorial per semester. Other classes, while still part of the central curriculum, were not required each semester and were substituted as electives.

Students came to Piedmont from a variety of situations including other colleges. Pre-credit classes were made up of these individuals as well as students who had not yet attended college-level classes. Consistent in both of these student groups was the strong desire to "get into credit." It became a theme throughout the skills development program that the students were intensely interested in getting "through the door" and commencing their college education.

Reading and Study Skills Department

Reading and study skills was one of the two "gatekeeper" classes that influence whether a student enters the degree program. This class, along with English, had a large influence in the placement process that concluded each semester. Assessment was made via a list of attributes generated by the faculty, which were seen as necessary for students to succeed in college (See Appendix A). Department heads solicited information on each student to verify which skills have been mastered and then render decisions about placement.

At the time research was gathered for this study, the department was teaching 14 classes. Classes were leveled into 3 zones based loosely upon reading proficiency: 80 level, 90 level and 101 (credit) level. Additionally, there were several specialty classes that taught to specific deficits such as "executive time management," test-taking, and research.

The department was made up of 12 instructors. These teachers had backgrounds ranging from elementary education, to secondary education in various content areas, to

ESL. Only one of the instructors had training in LD prior to working at Piedmont. A department head was charged with the development of curriculum and the scheduling of courses administered by the department. Additionally, the chair was responsible for creating homogeneous class groupings and determining student level.

Institutionally, the Reading and Study Skills Department had developed a reputation of being orthodox in its approach. Other academic areas such as social science, art, and even English developed methodology that at times strayed from the Piedmont ideal of pure cognitive instruction. The Reading and Study Skills Department, perhaps because of the nature of the instruction being so closely tied to the diagnostic testing, remained a steadfast adherent to officially sanctioned pedagogy throughout this research project.

RS 091: Introduction to Course, Course Chronology, and Course Procedures

Most instruction in reading and study skills at Piedmont College used a cognitive curriculum consisting of skill areas that the student must master in order to proceed to the next level of study skills. It is not uncommon for students to be assigned tasks intended to increase highlighting skills, or assigned tasks specifically aimed at their questioning skills. (See Appendix B)

My reading and study skills class, the subject of this research project, followed a different philosophical tradition. This class attempted to present a discourse communities model or genre-inspired curriculum. In this model, academic literacy is constructed to be a linguistic genre that the students are encouraged to participate in. (See Appendix C) Stressed in this class was instruction using short expository opinion essays that the

students read and responded to in writing. This process I attempted to teach increasingly closer approximations to an idealized form of academic paper.

In this class students read, de-constructed and formed responses to teacher-chosen expository essays. These essays possessed academic characteristics that consisted of linear argumentation with a central assertion. Students learned to respond to these essays by creating an opinion and writing their own expository essay.

For this dissertation research, genre instruction was adapted from the Australian Systemic Functional Linguistics movement and the North American New Rhetoric Studies group. Instruction focused upon revealing how linear argumentative essays were valued in parts of academia, and how students could increase their ability to write within this genre. Instructional patterns consisted of evaluation of model essays, assisted deconstruction of the source text, and then dialogic reply with both written and spoken text.

Class Format. A class that purports to teach using genre-inspired pedagogy stands out in an institution like PMC. As in any institution, there is pressure to be on the "same page" as other members, but this is especially true of this institution. Piedmont tries especially hard to train and maintain a certain "standard" of pedagogy.

The longer I taught study skills at Piedmont College, the more I felt that traditional study skills approaches were inadequate. These approaches seemed to stress decontextualized information and offer skills strategy as a way to reach "metacognition" as a goal. Try as I might, I could never fully define this concept or see the useful connection between it and successful participation in college. I increasingly became

more interested in meaningful tasks that more closely reflected activities that my students would engage with in the "real world" of academia. Because of this, I turned my attention away from decontextualized passages from skills manuals and increasingly used persuasive essays from academic or news magazines as a palette on which I applied traditional study skills.

This type of reading held many advantages for study skills instruction. I believed that this expository approach held my students' interest. Using short essays enabled me to choose the most interesting topic of the day and to make lessons around it. Instead of a reading that did not relate to anything that the student was interested in, I was able to provide real content that would make the student want to learn. I began immediately to see the advantage of using "content" to indirectly teach study skills.

Later, in the semesters immediately preceding my pilot study, I began to see the close connection this approach had to a genre approach, and I was able to adapt to it without much curricular change. Adopting a genre approach encouraged me to emphasize the broader cultural implications of literacy while still using my developing expository essay approach. What changed was recognizing that the content did not need to be contemporary events or history. Instead, I could instruct my literacy class around broad patterns of discourse.

What changed for me then was a movement away from metacognition as a goal. This goal represented to me a decontextualized focus that often failed in getting my students to succeed in class activities. The use of genre allowed me to substitute production of knowledge as a goal for instruction. This goal, characterized by

meaningful participation in academic discourse, held more possibilities for student membership and seemed more consistent with constructivist belief.

Genre literacy instruction became the philosophical glue that bound my rather scattered approach. Using this umbrella I was able to see the usefulness of teaching a class directed towards a membership goal. This seemed very different from the diagnostic approach that my colleagues used.

My reading and study skills class became increasingly inspired by genre philosophy. This manifested itself in my instruction in several ways. First, it provided the philosophical explanation of guiding principles by which I instructed the class. Most importantly however, because genre emphasizes instruction targeted to a particular discourse community, it provided a curricular guide suggesting a direction that instruction could take. I knew that the target community I was teaching to was the academy. I knew that there were surface features to this form of reading and writing that could be taught using adapted traditional study skills methods. What was left was a sequenced curricular procedure that would connect the skills that I had already developed and the reading and writing practices I wished to reveal. The result of this meshing was my reading and study skills class.

The table of course assignments below provides an overview of the course assignments. This class met for a period of 15 weeks from January to May 1999. The class met for approximately 4 and 1/2 hours a week. Following this table I will provide a more detailed account of the class assignments relevant to this research.

Table 5: Course Assignments

Date	Assignment	Course Section
Week 1	Introduction to Skills Bank	Introduction and Skills Bank section/ Introduction to a Paradigmatic Understanding of Literacy
Week 2	Irving Berlin Essay	
Week 3	Pax Americana Essay	Single essay evaluation section
Week 4	Environmental Essay/Duck Article	
Week 5	AIDS Essay	
Week Off		
Week 6	David Duke/Cult of Ethnicity Double-essay	Two or more essay evaluation section (Students make assertion based upon reading of 2 essays, then students make assertion based upon several essays)
Week 7		
Week 8	Holocaust double essay	
Week 9	Krauthammer multi-essay	
Week 10		
Week Off		
Week 11	Introduction to Learning Disabilities Lecture	LD Section of course
Week 12	Medical Model/ Cognitive Model Lecture/Discussion	
Week 13	Social Constructive Model Lecture/Discussion	
Week 14	Final paper on Definition of Own Learning	Final Paper Preparation Section
Week 15	Preparation for Finals Lecture/Discussion	Finals Week
Finals Week		

Class Procedures. It was common for classrooms in Piedmont College to consist of several tables arranged in a horseshoe with a central smaller table that I used as my desk. Day one was always a difficult day for me. My goal was always to try to have the class develop quickly into a form of community. I really relied on their input into the dialog for this sense of community to develop. On day one none of that happened. I was for the most part speaking and they were only listening.

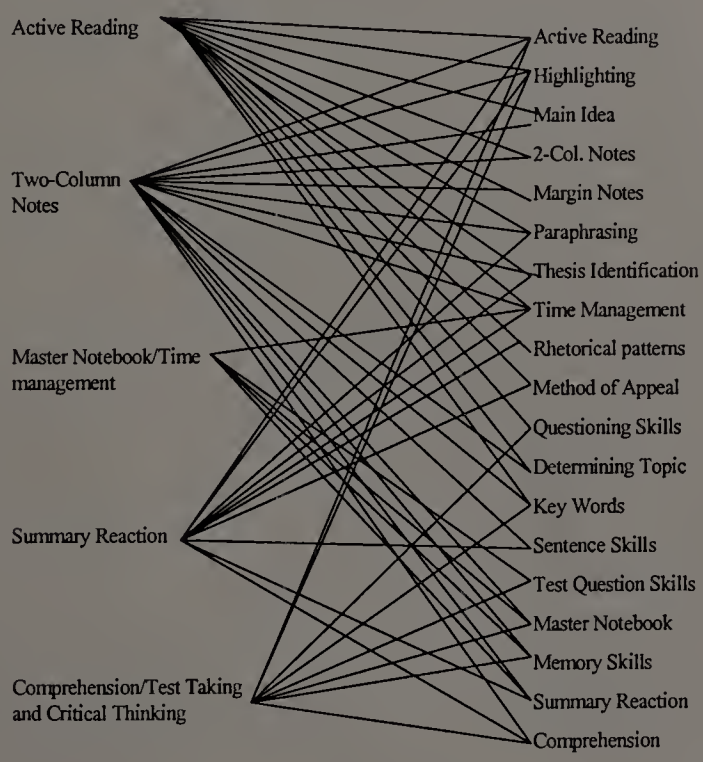
The start of the class was usually taken up with a discussion of the syllabus. I used this opportunity to begin discussing the class and tried to emphasize that this class was going to be "different" from other remedial reading and study classes that they may have attended so far. This class would employ an alternative orientation that would serve as a guide throughout the semester. This class would be different.

I stressed the difference for several reasons. Mostly, I wanted the students to start thinking about how this class was in relation to the other remedial classes they may have attended. It was important for me that they become good consumers in the process of literacy acquisition. Once I could get them to thinking critically about the class, I could then hopefully get them to be better judges about the usefulness of the approach. Also, one of the most important components of my approach to genre was the explicitness of the political nature of literacy acquisition. I stressed from the start of the class that the goal of the class was academic literacy and that this literacy was different from other forms of literacy and that it functioned in our society in specific ways.

I asserted that the remedial classes that they had so far probably emphasized the use of the "cognitive model" of literacy processing. I emphasized this by writing a quick drawing of a computer on the board, complete with thumbnail input and output areas. I asked the students if instructors using this picture had ever assessed them. Most said no. I then explained that in the cognitive model teachers frequently used the aid of this model to display what they think is going on with the literacy processes of the students. With the ensuing discussion, most students would be reminded that indeed somewhere in their past, or even more recently with their PMC advisor or through admissions, they had seen the model and had it applied to them.

Next, still within the first week of the class, I tried to provide a sort of overview of traditional skills pedagogy. I tried to accomplish this by showing the students all of the study skills that were traditionally taught at Piedmont. I did this by showing them a web consisting of clustered skill zones on one side of a sheet of paper and as many small "skills" as I could think of on the other. The sheet had crisscrossed lines indicating which skill zones consisted of which skills. Even just a quick look at the sheet revealed that approaching skills from a "skills" perspective is a daunting task. The lines on this sheet crisscrossed in every conceivable direction. Skills zones on one side of the paper were themselves represented as "micro" skills on the other side, thus allowing them to be used as building block skills for other skill clusters. An example of this would be the skill zone of active reading, which consists of many small skills, but nevertheless, is still represented as a sub-skill of another skill zone, in this case, summary/reaction.

Figure 1: Skill Zones



When I first made this chart, my intention was to demonstrate to the students how difficult a task learning study skills was. I had become accustomed to problems of students becoming overwhelmed by the work of the class early in the semester, and this sheet was intended to preempt some complaints. As the class developed, however, the purpose of the sheet shifted. With my growing discomfort with some of the inconsistencies of traditional LD pedagogy, I began to use the sheet for different purposes. With a developing constructive approach, the sheet became more and more of an artifact providing an insight into the world of pedagogy that stressed a hierarchy of skills that must have seemed endless to the students. After a time the sheet was not a way to prevent my usual start of the semester complaints about what this class was going to be about. Instead, it became representative of a world view that the class was going to explicitly reject in approach. My goal was to offer a vastly different approach in teaching a remedial literacy class.

Introduction to the Skills Bank. After this general introduction I then turned the class to the Skills Bank. I spent the major part of the first and second weeks discussing and lecturing about this document. It was the heart of my study skills section and consisted of a booklet of decontextualized skills organized around five chapters.

The first weeks of the class I painstakingly lectured, explained, and highlighted the topics as they appeared in the Skills Bank. It was the most decontextualized part of the class but still important. It was here that I directly taught the sub-skills necessary for these students' success with academic reading and writing. My first goal was to establish a unified vocabulary from which the class could share. This was significant. In order for

us to make our way through the essays that I had chosen for the semester's work, it was first necessary to have a working understanding of just what exactly I was getting at.

The Skills Bank was organized around the theme of "skill zones." This concept assumes that some grouping of traditional study skills occurs naturally and it increases comprehension to present them in this way. The general zones are: Time/master notebook; Active Reading; Summary/Reaction; 2-column Notes; and Test-taking.

Relevant Skills Bank Sections. Of particular importance in the Skills Bank for this research is active reading. In a traditional skills approach active reading is usually thought of as a patterned reading approach stressing the identification of main ideas. Typically, a programmed approach such as SQ3R or another similar reading strategy is used.

In my active reading chapter I emphasized the importance of a concept I call "Structural Analysis" of text. Structural analysis is the method I choose to make students aware of patterns in text. Essentially, I argued in class that any text can be evaluated by seeing what the parts are. While some forms of text, like long novels or perhaps poems, are difficult to analyze structurally, it is indeed possible and as a class we practiced doing this.

When doing a structural analysis the students are measuring academic expository texts against an idealized form. This form is the five-paragraph model. All highlighting and margin noting should in some way provide clues as to how the text is organized and how it matches or deviates from the idealized form. At this point I did explicitly mention that this idealized form is academic in origin. My intent was to quickly get the students

thinking about the community the text is related to and to quickly see parts and function to text chunks. By deconstructing texts in this way the students are already studying the academic genre around which the course is structured.

The third chapter of the bank is Summary/Reaction. When I first started at Piedmont, there was only one acceptable essay format for the Reading and Study Skills Department. This form was the summary. At Piedmont, summaries were truly summative. In the view of many faculty, no opinion should be included. I can remember an e-mail from a fellow faculty member who humorously informed me how a student's paper was progressing. She noted: "We spent today drugging his first draft and surgically removing from it all signs of his opinion, like a cancer. Think we got it all. The summary is now in post-op and resting quietly" (personal correspondence 1996).

As a young teacher at Piedmont, I too tried to enforce the no-opinion rule. While now it seems crazy to force students to write this way, I can remember that there were justifications. My training at PMC suggested that within the world of LD, it makes sense to eliminate "contaminants" in essays and to specifically teach to one skill. In this case, writing was the secondary goal of having the student accurately relate what the text was about. Embedded in the process were many of the assumptions of the LD paradigm. One such assumption was the belief that meaning was embedded only in the text. Also implied is the belief that the best writing re-creates the ideas that are already present in the text. It was during my third year of teaching skills to students at Piedmont that I allowed a class to create their own pattern of writing. This pattern became the reaction paper.

I do not claim that my class invented the reaction paper. It is interesting to me now as a student of literacy to see just what this early class was able to accomplish. As a class we wrote a paper formula that was remarkably similar to a classic academic paper. In it the students indicated the bibliographic origin of the piece examined and the original author's thesis, and then declared their opinion and proceeded to provide support for it. In time I came to see this form of essay as far superior to the simple summary. While at the time I didn't realize it, I have now come to see the brilliance in this class's work. This essay represented the beginnings of the expository form of writing. It is, as Cheryl Geisler would say, the "coin of the realm" in the academy. I came see that by teaching specifically this form of writing, I was teaching to my students the genre of academic writing.

The Expository Essay. My desire to make more meaningful the study skills instruction in my class made me turn to the expository essay as a primary means of instruction. This essay form has several advantages. First, it often takes academic form. Frequently, it will have a clear thesis and clear support followed by a conclusion. This form, I reasoned, would be a closer step to the more academic papers that I felt to be the "target" I was reaching for. Later, I could see the value in taking a broader definition of academic papers. For me the academic paper would be defined as a form. It would be defined as a particular structured way to present an argument. It is this definition that I used throughout most of my research class. This discourse pattern, I argued, represents the patterned speech of the academic discourse community.

Experience has taught me that assigning reading and writing tasks using academic papers with remedial students discourages them and prove once again to them that they are not able to do text analysis. In order to do academic reading it is necessary to take an

intermediate step and teach essays that resemble academic readings in structure, but are written to a more general audience. The logic in doing this is that once familiarity has been established with this genre, the students will be more able to deal with the more rigorous requirements of "legitimate" academic literacy. In some ways, and by some definitions, it is really not that difficult to find essays that contain the desirable characteristics. Opinion essays from the Op-Ed page of the *New York Times* or opinion essays from popular newsmagazines such as *Time* and *Newsweek* offer many selections. The characteristics I look for include a central assertion that is articulated in the first few paragraphs. This statement may or may not be a simple thesis statement, but it must be discernable by the students. Next, I require a topic that is important. My definition of important is rather broad. In essence, it is anything that I think that the students will be able to discuss in an animated way. The topics are then the traditional social studies teacher's fare of controversial issues of contemporary society.

For me, these essays need not be current. In some ways essays that discuss the Gulf War or are somewhat dated opinions about AIDS are useful. Frequently, students will ask when reading an older essay if they should answer it as a person who has "the knowledge of today," or as a person who just read the essay when it came out. I always say answer it as a person of today. This, I think, has several advantages. First, this teaches the student to value his or her own background knowledge. The students that I teach many times have learned to doubt or to cover up any knowledge that they already have. I think this is disastrous for college students. After all, I am asking them to participate in a dialog. The information that they bring to the table must be seen by the students as viable and useful for them to achieve the identity of membership in the

community. Finding essays that require students to use clearly individual background information goes far in demonstrating that their ideas are valued. Additionally, I argue to the class, that as they become "experts" in a field of study, they will be able to draw upon deeper understanding of the subject. It is expected of them that as they grow more and more into a field of study that they will "produce knowledge." Using essays that require that now enable us as a class to pursue this goal sooner.

The essays I drew upon for this dissertation research are list reflecting the news issues of the recent past. The complete list of these readings used for this class can be found in Appendix D. Prominent in this list are the writings of noted conservative essayist Charles Krauthammer. Also present are either other significant essayists or controversial topics. This is important for LDL students. I wanted them to have a passion in their writing. I wanted them to have a purpose in seeking to gain entry into literacy. Choosing a person or topics that the students either hated or loved made more likely their participation in the written discourse of the class.

Structurally, these essays are mostly one-page in length with a strong thesis or opinion backed up sequentially by identifiable main ideas. With some care and with some introduction, most students need little or no background knowledge; students already have what is necessary for comprehension.

This possession of background knowledge is important in enabling the students to produce knowledge. Because of the fact that they frequently already have firm opinions about flag burning, AIDS, racism, homosexuality, or the environment, providing an opportunity to respond is almost welcome. Stressing genre allows this desire to participate to move into written participation. A genre approach mandates that the

students will be instructed in the discourse patterns of the academy. Responses to essays will be directed towards production of knowledge and towards participation in academic discourse.

Towards this end instruction in this sequence stressed a process of textual evaluation and sample modeling of target essays. For example, for the students' essays discussing flag desecration, the class procedure was to first read the essay, and then underline significant parts such as the main ideas and thesis. Following a general discussion of the merits of the source essay the students then read student-generated response essays that I have collected from previous classes. This pattern of seeing text deconstructed and then evaluating models of responses proved to be a powerful focus for student essays. They could readily see the goal of what the final product should look like.

Essays for this section of the class are grouped by how they are introduced and by how they are used. First I used single essays that the students responded to with single compositions. Then I grouped essays together, requiring the students to write papers that borrowed from two sources. Finally, I handed out nearly a dozen essays, all written by Charles Krauthammer, and required students to respond to commonalities between several essays. This pattern goes far in leading the students into patterns of academic reading and writing.

Final Weeks of the Class: LD Section. The final weeks of the class focused upon the subject of LD. This final section of the course emphasized genre instruction through the quality of continued emphasis upon academic standards now applied to a content

area. The curriculum was to focus the group upon what had been happening to them as they proceeded through the class and to require them to critically assess their progress.

The procedure for this section was to present an historical overview of LD. For this I presented from the material in Chapter Two concerning LD paradigms. I stressed that at the end of the continuum is the philosophical location for some of the methods used in this class. After this, I tried to demonstrate how genre, a concept with which they became increasingly familiar, could be used as a tie between the constructive and the cognitive paradigms. I tried to describe genre as a tie between the two worlds of literacy instruction. There was usually one paper assigned during this section, the final paper of the semester where the students, after considering all the work that they had accomplished, assessed how they now felt about their learning and membership in academic literacy.

Principle Informants

In this section I will introduce each of my principal informants. I will provide this information in the same way that I was introduced to them: with a multitude of information that eventually became a full person as the diagnostic information I was given merged with the real person I was confronted with. The names of these individuals have been changed to preserve their anonymity. This class was a fairly representative example of a 90's level reading and study skills class, consisting of six members with five men and one female. Two additional members of the class, one female and one male, dropped out of the class for reasons that did not pertain to this research. The persons listed below are not a complete list of those remaining. Instead, I have chosen

representative members of the class to discuss in detail. Each informant was chosen as representative of a possible outcome of a genre-inspired curriculum. Brief biographic introductions providing information relevant to understanding this research follow.

Nick

In alphabetical order, my first student was Nick Abbot, a twenty-two year old student from the Midwest who came to Piedmont with some college experience. On paper, Nick seemed like he would be an ideal student at PMC. He had attended some college and also had extremely high reading test scores. Nick was diagnosed in the first grade with ADHD. Nick presented himself as an engaging conversationalist. My notes state that he was a "thin, intense sort of guy," who liked to participate in after class discussions.

My relationship with Nick felt competitive at times. Nick was the type of student who liked to work out information verbally. I would often find myself in verbal sparring matches. For the most part, I enjoyed these encounters. I would often remark that these exchanges are the essence of what the "dialogic nature" of literacy was at the academy. This seemed also to have a positive effect upon the class because his interaction would often encourage (or provoke) other student commentary.

Sarah

The second student member of the class was Sarah Cooper, a twenty-one year old woman who comes from Texas. With the other members of the class, I felt a connection and a belief that we were all on the "same page" of literacy discussion. With Sarah I did not have this feeling. Early in the semester she mentioned that she did not "get along" with study skills instructors. Also, other teachers had warned me that Sarah could be difficult on occasion. Sarah's first diagnosis was rather mixed. Her early papers suggest a myriad of difficulties that were expressed as being "non-specific." Later, in 1997 her primary diagnosis became attention deficit disorder with additional reading and writing disorders present.

David

The next member of the class was David Dunbar, an older student in his early thirties. As an older student, David presented himself as a different student who came to the class with many life experiences that he drew upon in his daily activities. David's official diagnosis at Piedmont was "specific learning disability, characterized by slow reading rate, phonological processing difficulties with the mechanics of written language." His testing in reading revealed him to read at or around the seventh grade-level. His comprehension was tested to be at the college level. David also came to the class with some college. His grades at a community college were lower than expected, forcing him to leave the school after only one semester.

Tom

The last informant in the class was Tom Zeno, a twenty-year-old male student who was just out of high school. He mentioned that his choices were between Piedmont and the Marine Corps, but at the last minute he chose to join Piedmont and forgo a career in the military. Tom entered the class with strengths in academics. He was widely read and fairly sophisticated. He considered himself a libertarian with well thought out opinions about the issues of the day. Tom's diagnosis was ADHD. In a conversation after class Tom confided in me that he "doesn't think that ADHD exists." He stressed that he came to Piedmont because of the small classes and individual attention. He asked me, "Why does it have to be LD?"

As a class I felt this group to be fairly typical. Statistics of the entire school population revealed that 39.6% of the students of that year had solely language-based LD, 18.8% had solely ADHD, and 38.6% had mixed language and attention difficulties. While this comparison reveals similarities, it is clear that this was not a homogeneous group. Despite the institutional attempt to make homogeneous groupings, the only significant characteristic that was shared by this group was an inability to succeed in school. Table 6 provides an overview of the informants who participated in this research and their official diagnosis as provided by Piedmont College.

Table 6: Table of Principal Informants and Official Diagnosis

Student Name	**Preliminary diagnosis (from admissions form)**	**First diagnosis**	**Self-reported Weakness** (reported to interviewer)	**Reading Level (GORT-3)**
Nick	ADHD	1981 (age 4) ADHD	Attention difficulties	12.9+ passage; 12.9+ comp.
Sarah	ADHD, Auditory-perceptual , Visual-Perceptual and organizational LD	Grade four; (age 9) non-specific learning disability.	Test taking, time-management Organization	7.8 passage
David	Specific Learning Disability characterized by slow reading rate, phonological processing difficulties, underdeveloped reading comprehension, and extreme difficulties with mechanics of written language (e.g. capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.)	Self-reported as being in early grade school.	Comprehension, reading	7.8 passage; 12.8 comprehension
Tom	ADHD; LD in Math	1992/1996	Proofreading; Staying on topic; Study skills;	16.8 letter word identification, 16.9 Comprehension (Woodcock-Johnson)

Limitations of Study

While the desirability of using Piedmont College as a research site is not out-weighed by its limitations, they nonetheless merit some discussion. In this section I will discuss issues that served to limit this dissertation research.

Pedagogy at Piedmont, while deeply influenced by the field of LD, was less than totally embedded in LD philosophy or practice. In general, LD has moved toward a more mainstreamed or inclusive orientation. The desire in general LD pedagogy is to maintain students in the mainstream environment to help these students acquire the membership skills necessary to thrive. This practice, it is believed, works to reduce the stigma of a separate curriculum. At Piedmont non-inclusion was considered a vital part of the program. It offered students the "opportunity to work on the areas of learning on which they needed to specialize." Following from this, the curriculum was advertised as "skills based." It was the belief system at Piedmont that learning was a set of skills that should be directly taught to students in "diagnostic" ways. Additionally, due to pressures of student retention and income flow, Piedmont had at the time of this research commenced development of a more compensatory curriculum which sought to help students by developing curriculum which compensated for student ability deficits rather than trying to remediate deficient skills. These orientations place Piedmont at the extreme end of mainstream LD pedagogy.

A second area of limitation for this study was caused by the use of genre theory. Currently, few practitioners use an explicit genre-based approach in LD. This

absence of like-minded scholarship not only reveals a gap that this study is intended to partially fill; it also demonstrates the relative newness of this form of study.

Conclusion

This chapter relates the methodology and research issues that impact the understanding of this dissertation. I believe that it is necessary to see the research task and the course pedagogy together. This is needed because so much of the class is the product of my growing understanding of literacy and identity. Recognizing that literacy practice flows from the discourse community which employs it (Gee 1990), I began to see that I was not serving my students' need by thinking that literacy instruction could be taught as a sideline to history instruction. I needed to make the focus of instruction more on the fabric of literacy itself and move away from distractions of various content areas. Also, I could also see that I needed to abandon my unspoken notion that literacy was the neutral conveyor of information. If I believed that literacy was the discourse expression of a discourse community, then I would have to recognize that there were social/cultural and political implications. In taking these steps, a new paradigm emerged in my teaching. It was one that was greatly fueled by my reading of genre-influenced pedagogy.

The methodology I employed for this study complemented my research task. I used qualitative methods to reveal what happens when a genre approach is used. To further understand the outcome of such an approach, I employed a form of CDA to triangulate my qualitative findings. This process revealed student behavior within this

specific context. This research methodology provided a clear picture of the processes these students went through becoming members of my class.

CHAPTER 4
CONSTRUCTIONS OF LITERACY

Introduction

In the next two chapters I will present findings related to my research questions. I will present this data in two ways. First, I will examine the issue of literacy and construction of literacy. I will organize this section by presenting data organized around core assertions I make in this study. Next, in Chapter 5, I will present data concerning identity and construction of identity. This section will be presented as case studies.

I will first look at the data collected in this study by examining the issue of constructions of literacy. I believe that we construct literacy in our own individual ways. Yet, at the same time, discourse communities also have their own standards by which to measure membership. When it comes to students labeled Learning Disabled entering an academic discourse community, this tension is more pronounced. Students who have been labeled Learning Disabled struggle to achieve membership in academic communities.

This research reveals two related aspects of literacy acquisition. First, this research reveals that there are patterns of this transition from non-participant to participant in academic literacy for LDL students. The students and teacher in this class are involved in a complex series of negotiations. These negotiations cluster around literacy constructions of the teacher, of the institution, and of the student. It is more than simple skills development.

Second, literacy constructions in this class reflect the process of becoming members of a new discourse community based upon the reading and writing practices of the academy. Membership in this community is traditionally thought to be synonymous with power and influence in American society.

Finally, this research reveals implications of model choice in the ability of students to fully participate in academic communities. The competing models at PMC offer students contrasting definitions of success.

Organization of the Chapter

Following are the major literacy assertions that I am making after examining the data gathered for this research. First I will examine the teacher constructions of literacy and how my own developing definition impacted this study. I argue in this section that my own definitions of literacy were far from static. Instead my perspective shifted as I pursued graduate study and this research. My course was a product of a gradual shift from a skills to a membership approach. I then present at the end of this section that the product of this shift is a genre-inspired class. Genre philosophy serves as the final inspiration to finalize the transformation of a study skills class from a skills to a membership approach.

I will then examine the institutional constructions of literacy. I will show in this section how my class did not operate in a vacuum as I had first surmised, but operated within a greater institutional culture that also impacted this study. Here I assert that the Piedmont construction of literacy is well embedded in the cognitive/skills paradigm and

has effect upon student behavior. Also I assert that the Reading and Study Skills Department is particularly embedded in this world view. My own class, on the other hand, follows a different philosophical tradition.

Finally, I will examine student constructions of literacy. This final category will explore how students adapted to multiple demands and developed deeper understanding building upon their already established views. Students are shown adapting to this multiple discourse environment and struggling to satisfy all the demands placed on them as they proceed. Following this I will provide closing remarks for the section.

In the following sections it sometimes becomes problematic referring to myself as both "I" and "teacher." For the purposes of clarity, I will refer to myself in the first person in the narrative of this chapter. I will also, in the context of presenting text tables, list my identity as "teacher" when identified script is used.

Teacher Constructions of Literacy: Introduction

My first question sought to examine the constructions of literacy in the classroom. I wanted to know both what literacy practices were being enacted and what language was used in the process of this enactment. Teacher constructions of literacy are clearly a part of this question.

My teaching and my research in the area of Learning Disabilities led me to an understanding. I came to believe that the cognitive perspective so prevalent at my school was working against some of my students. As I have argued, the cognitive perspective, because of its construction of students as somehow flawed information processors, results

in a difficult transition for students. If literacy equates meaningful participation in discourse communities, then a flawed processor has limited ability to make a transition into full participation.

Literacy Definitions from a Slowly Developing Constructivist

In entering my data analysis section of this dissertation project, I felt that my own constructions of literacy were primarily set far in advance of this project. My analysis of the literacy enacted in my class, however, reveals the evolving nature of my thinking about literacy and about literacy development. My pilot research was the first time that I used what I considered to be a fully articulated genre approach. The next semester my informant class followed this orientation. An evaluation of data reveals that as a teacher I slowly incorporated constructivist practice into my pedagogy and that this process was ongoing, even as I gathered my data for this research project.

In order to reveal this developing nature of my pedagogy, it is necessary to first consider the entire evolution of my class, even before my pilot study or before the arrival of my informants. The information for this assertion comes not only from the data-gathering sequence of this particular class. Because of my practice of incorporating "pre-used" material, it is also necessary to consider the developmental history of the class pedagogy.

At its core my "skills section" of the class is a traditional teacher-centered curriculum. It is chronologically the first section of the class that I developed. It proceeds from traditional Learning Disabilities pedagogy because it attempts to remediate students

who lack the skills necessary to properly process literacy tasks. The Skills Bank itself exemplifies this skills-based approach. A look at the table of contents reveals a rather traditional segmented skills outline. A student using this manual would expect to proceed through traditional skill "zones" such as active reading, note-taking, materials management, essay-writing and test-taking. A review of cognitive-inspired skills manuals reveals similar patterns. Literacy ability is divided and taught as discrete isolated skills.

A review of my lesson plans in the initial weeks of the informant class reveals this early skills approach format. My lessons during this period are short and cover specific sections of the Skills Bank. I did this for a reason. My field notes confirm my attempts to "get through" this section of the curriculum while still hoping that their use will provide the "membership characteristics" of academic literacy.

Later, once the introduction to the class was over, I proceeded into a more participatory format where the students were encouraged to read and respond to a series of essays. My initial belief in evaluating the data for this project was that this curriculum was slowly incorporated into my pedagogy until it eventually squeezed out all decontextualized skill instruction. An evaluation of the data revealed this not to be the case. Looking back upon my procedures in teaching this class, it is startling how easily I was able to shift from a skills approach, appeasing my institutional requirements, and a membership approach, satisfying my constructivist leanings. In the following passage taken from my introduction to the Learning Disabilities section, I reveal this pattern of shifting back and forth. This text sample is taken as the students are returning from a short coffee break and are resuming the class dialog.

David	Some of them would prob…maybe get it if they could move through like we're moving along in this class, I mean we're not touching on real the individual's… like for writing, you know, style and stuff. But I'm getting that anywhere, I 'm empowering myself somewhere else. But I'm getting the tools to go through the system in this class…
Teacher	Yea
David	And a lot of those people might be stuck on something that they don't necessarily need to be stuck on and they're missing out you know what I'm saying? There are…
Teacher	Yea, you're really touching on something which I think is really important I call it metacognition or ability to produce knowledge. If you can see yourself as a member of the community and be empowered to play the game, then the skills suddenly become important and you do use them, you use them more often. And I have, what I find with skill acquisition is that my classes do acquire the skills but it is not so much that I am working on them specifically but students go wow, yea, there is an empowerment issue……I can produce knowledge.
David	Yea

David, in suggesting that he is getting skills elsewhere apparently alarmed me. I believe that my attempt to clearly place skills as part of my curriculum reveals that I am teaching simultaneously to the concepts of metacognition and production of knowledge. Clearly, this reveals an attempt on my part to teach to these related but dissimilar concepts.

At PMC, metacognition is considered the goal of cognitive instruction. A well-done skills approach results in metacognition according to numerous teaching training documents and is the purpose behind having the students become aware of their learning "style." Every student becomes painfully aware of this as a goal. It is a prominent goal in tutorial and a strong component of a notebook called the S.E.L.F. notebook (Piedmont College 1995). This notebook whose title is an acronym for Self-Evaluation and Learning Foundations is the portfolio given to students as they enter PMC. It is a sort of depository of learning style and self-advocacy information. As its goal it uses terms such

as "metacognitive awareness" and provides fill-in-the-blank explanatory material for the students. The intention is that the students will then use this portfolio throughout the rest of their academic careers.

In this environment, having the students see both concepts as a goal provided me with valuable cover. I could still be seen as teaching the skills curriculum if I were to be called to my supervisor's office. I was also teaching constructively, using methods emphasizing membership. I was able to discuss skills as an important component of belonging to a particular discourse community. Additionally, I was able to insert the concept of production of knowledge with skills use to further this more constructive side of literacy acquisition.

The presence of the concepts of metacognition and of production of knowledge at first surprised me when I reviewed this research data. My present understanding of genre and of constructivism suggested to me that I always "felt this way." In this passage it seems clear, however, that my own understanding of constructive teaching practices was still developing. It becomes clear to me that as I attempted to teach the class and satisfy the constituencies to which I belonged, I began a pattern of attempting to teach to multiple communities simultaneously. This pattern continued even into this research project.

While the mixing of production of knowledge and of metacognition reveals the evolutionary characteristic of my teaching, evaluation of my emphasis upon dialog suggests a strong continuing constructivist direction. An important aspect of my understanding of constructive practices in teaching at this time was use of dialogic or participatory curriculum. Throughout the class there was evidence of this pattern. This

next text sequence is an example of this desire taken from one of the last class discussions near the end of the year. In this sequence I am adding my interpretation of what the class goals were.

Teacher	Ah, and that's another question. I guess what we were trying to do in that is get that notion of membership and joining academic discourse community, or whatever. And maybe, the idea of bringing you in and having you (examine) if you felt like you were an outsider.... Of course it's going to be difficult for you to speak.
Student	Right.
Teacher	The fact you're speaking more is really gratifying....

Here my intention in the class was to force or foster an attitude in which the students would see themselves as participants of this community. Clearly included is my emphasis upon "joining" and of participation in the community as evidence that the students were feeling that they were active valued members.

This participatory nature was also evident when I discussed with the class papers that seek to explain how the writer is viewing their own learning. This final "Definition of Your Own Learning" paper was intended to be the finale of the class where evidence of constructive understanding would be clearly evident.

Here, in this text sequence, the students are encouraged to compare papers with each other and to discuss how successful they were in making a statement or in "producing knowledge." Present in this passage was my emphasis upon participation and upon production of knowledge.

David	(Reads from paper) its definitely a rough draft. [Concluding statement]
Teacher	I like what you're saying.
Nick	It sounds awesome.
Teacher	You can almost hear the music swelling up behind you. (laughter)
All	(General agreement paper was good.)

Teacher	That was really good, and I think you do…. You know, the contrast is strong between the two papers that we heard so far. One is like wow, I really, …this really helps me to think about how the information is coming by looking at that; you're kinda throwing it away saying wait a minute, it really doesn't really help me as knowing that differences aren't necessarily disabilities. And its really important for both of you to kinda respect both sides I think. Because both sides are definitely….
Student	Like I said, This was more…it was easier to do it this way, like….
Teacher	So you could agree with him still?
Student	I do have questions about, you know, being label…like, learning disabled, and like, I do agree with what he is saying.
Teacher	Uh hum.
Student	Like this was easier to do it this way.
Teacher	(Laugh) ok! Do you want to write a disclaimer on the bottom? But I really don't agree with this paper? (Laugh) ok. Fine.
David	Well I do say that I use the remediation I mean…
Teacher	You do.
David	[Continuing] …I'm in that world. But I see it more as just…those things I didn't I wasn't ready to learn. Learning, it's not necessarily fixing a broken computer because I don't think that I was ever broken. I just think I was… I couldn't follow the guidelines. I wasn't ready to. You know, so I now just see it as learning.
Teacher	Yea, but that's not really there. I don't think we hear you saying I'm a broken computer. You're saying instead you know it helps me when I, when I…..
Bob	I'm just learning skills, I'm learning skills, and these are some of skills that have helped me
Teacher	Yea, and that's the trick, man, if your not a broken computer, and you don't see yourself, but instead see like, like anybody, if you're not good at swimming, um, if you're going to be thrown into a pool and you know it, you might want to grab on to the life preserver as you are being tossed you know, because that's like an obvious one. If I'm going to be in a situation where I getting a lot of, my homework is going to be like this, and you know it, you take precautions or you try to get into a class where that is not so stressed. There is a subtle difference there and um, I'm not really sure how to articulate it. (Pause) good job, those are two good papers to do
David	Thank you. Um, I guess, no enough! I don't have to say more.
Teacher	(Laugh) ok, you can if you want to though.
David	I just said, well, you know, Bob talked more about details about what he does, his experiences, and he talked about view of himself and the details what he is doing to adjust effect, you know, to help himself.
Teacher	Yea
David	(inaudible) I see myself, you know…. differently
Student	You also have a lot more life experience than I do, so you have a lot more to talk about.
David	Right, right,
Teacher	That's true, man, when you've only been in school, not to diminish like…

Student	No
Teacher	But you've always been a student, when and, and what a burden to have in your live, to have always been a student. And I forget about that because I have had life experiences too.
Nick	Man, this is like…I think that these papers are all about where you are coming from
Teacher	Say more.
David	Well its about us as learners and….
Nick	Exactly. I mean where you're coming from, if we're coming from the complete we have always been in an academic format, we have always been in an academic format and everything; I mean that's where we are coming from. But he hasn't always been in an academic format, he has been in all kinds of different formats …
Teacher	It's such an advantage.
Nick	(garbled) [makes joke about not having been anywhere]
Teacher	(respond to joke) The point is, I think, is well taken, I think that you can get life experiences, and you can find that you are having success outside of academia. If academia is your whole identity and you have been just brought up through the ranks, that's what we do to our children, and you don't have the agrarian society anymore, where, where, you are going to go to school like Laura Engles Wilder, you know, and gee I think that I'll go to school because now they are having school. Its like who you are, I mean, you're always, as a society in that group going up through the ranks
Nick	Disco!
Tom	That's it.
Teacher	(Pause) ok, Let's sum….
Nick	You summed that up really well.

These passages reveal the orientation that I as the teacher held. My role in this dialog was one of facilitator. I intentionally prompted the class with open-ended analytical questions and comments designed to elicit dialog. My orientation was a belief system of dynamic participation in class dialog. My original aim in discussing the read papers was to relate how we had seen two approaches to learning and that both were acceptable. One student's paper related the importance of skill development. David's emphasized identity.

The subsequent discussion revealed the importance of dialog. Both students offered explanations about why they wrote what they did. A class member seemingly offered a disclaimer stating that he felt the cognitive format was "easier." David, on the other hand, suggested a more constructive approach. David's opinion seemingly centered on the concept of membership in communities. This membership in non-academic communities provides valued participation for their members. He suggested that many LDL students have limited community affiliations to counter the "broken" scholastic one.

This preceding passage also speaks to my changing understanding of skills vs. membership as my teaching at PMC progressed. This emphasis upon the advantage of being successful in different venues reveals how strongly I hoped to steer students into constructive orientations. Dialog in class discussion revealed to me that I had hoped to obtain evidence of complete constructive understandings of literacy. Furthermore, my journal suggests that I was progressing towards saying that the students did not really need a skills approach at all.

Clearly, this dialog shows a more balanced understanding of skills for the students. Students did indeed use the skills. Evaluation of data enabled me to begin to see that the whole point of the class was not the reduction of skills in importance but rather the employment of them towards a clearly defined end. This conclusion was possible because of student participatory dialog.

This conclusion developed slowly because I did not start teaching as a study skills teacher with a belief in genre instruction; examination of my skills instruction section in fact reveals my earlier traditional approach to teaching literacy. If left at this stage in

development, my class would not be much different than the myriad of other skills based-curricula that currently exist purporting to "fill in" the gaps in information that LDL students lack. What makes my class different, and what makes my class constructivist, is that it then takes this raw material and transforms it into something that is supportable from a different paradigm in the literacy debates.

If the skills section of the class emerges from the LD paradigm, then the class section of expository essay-writing proceeds from the constructivist paradigm. Here, perhaps inspired by my immersion in the constructivist coursework of my doctoral program, the students develop the literacy ability in a meaningful process. The tasks of this section are not the decontextualized skills acquisition process of the cognitive paradigm, but rather one that stresses literacy tasks that relate to real reading and real writing. This shift is towards a more genre-inspired instructional process.

Evidence of this shift of approach can be seen in the course syllabus. In this document I stress that I intend to take a "market place of ideas" approach. I also stated in the goals section the following:

> The goal of this class is to develop "academic literacy." Academic literacy is the ability to participate in an academic "community" and will help you thrive in a college or professional environment.

Later I state, "Additionally, students will increase their ability to participate during class discussions…." And, "Specifically, we will be evaluating and writing about information from a variety of sources." In this shift of emphasis from traditional study skills courses, I intended to stress how reading and writing tasks in the class will emphasize a "dialogic" process of trading and building upon ideas. This process is

consistent with my thinking of the time that strove to include whole writing tasks that my students could accomplish. This rejection of the decontextualized methodology of my department attempted to retain the skills instruction while directing writing tasks towards more meaningful assignments.

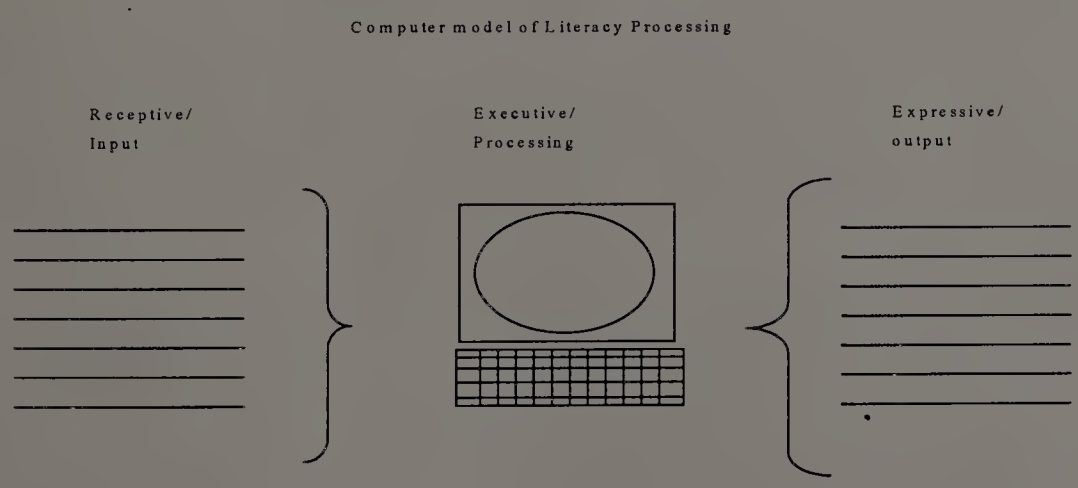
Repeatedly, I would instruct the students in writing essays to see them as "dialogic." I would stress that seeing the essays as part of a conversation would make the understanding of them easier. I did this lecture for this class by quoting Peter Elbow (Elbow 1981). My notes relate that I would stress the dialogic nature of literacy while still emphasizing that they may not necessarily be "invited into the conversation." Instead, I would stress, the students need to practice participation. This emphasis upon dialog and conversation reflected the push I was attempting to make towards a more constructive orientation of the class. Present in a dialogic orientation is an understanding of the norms, values, and power relationships of discourse community that sent the message and an implicit understanding that meaning was part of the dialog.

In introducing the multi-source essays, for example, I would emphasize that I was not looking for a comparison/contrast paper. This introductory statement confused the students in the class initially. Instead of a simple comparison/contrast paper I would insist that the students work towards "producing knowledge" by making an original argument about the source essays. This was what I believed to be a constructive assignment. Increasingly, by using multiple essays, the students are forced to confront the fact that they were constructing meaning from the various texts examined and from the interaction of those texts.

Teacher's Perspective: Paradigmatic Understanding of Literacy

Increasingly evident in my class was a constructive understanding of literacy. It was about two weeks into the course that I pointed out the multiple paradigms of literacy and how each "looks" at the work that we are now embarking upon. To do this I used the first chapters of the Skills Bank as an artifact of how to construct study skills from a cognitive perspective. I lectured using the computer model of literacy and explained some of the experiences that they are having at Piedmont. At Piedmont the computer or cognitive information processing model takes several forms. Visually, they usually compare a computer's input, processing, and output functions with a student's receptive, processing and expressive language. All share a deficit orientation to student abilities and all seek remediation of areas of weakness.

Figure 2: Information Processing Model



This model becomes apparent for the students in this community in several ways. It is the traditional format of the remedial tutorial that features a diagnostic checklist. This checklist attempts to list all of the cognitive abilities of a student. Remedial tutors list items from the list that the student is in need of, and teaches directly to those weaknesses. The checklist itself is a manifestation of the computer model because it constructs literacy as a series of skills that can be categorized as receptive, processing or expressive.

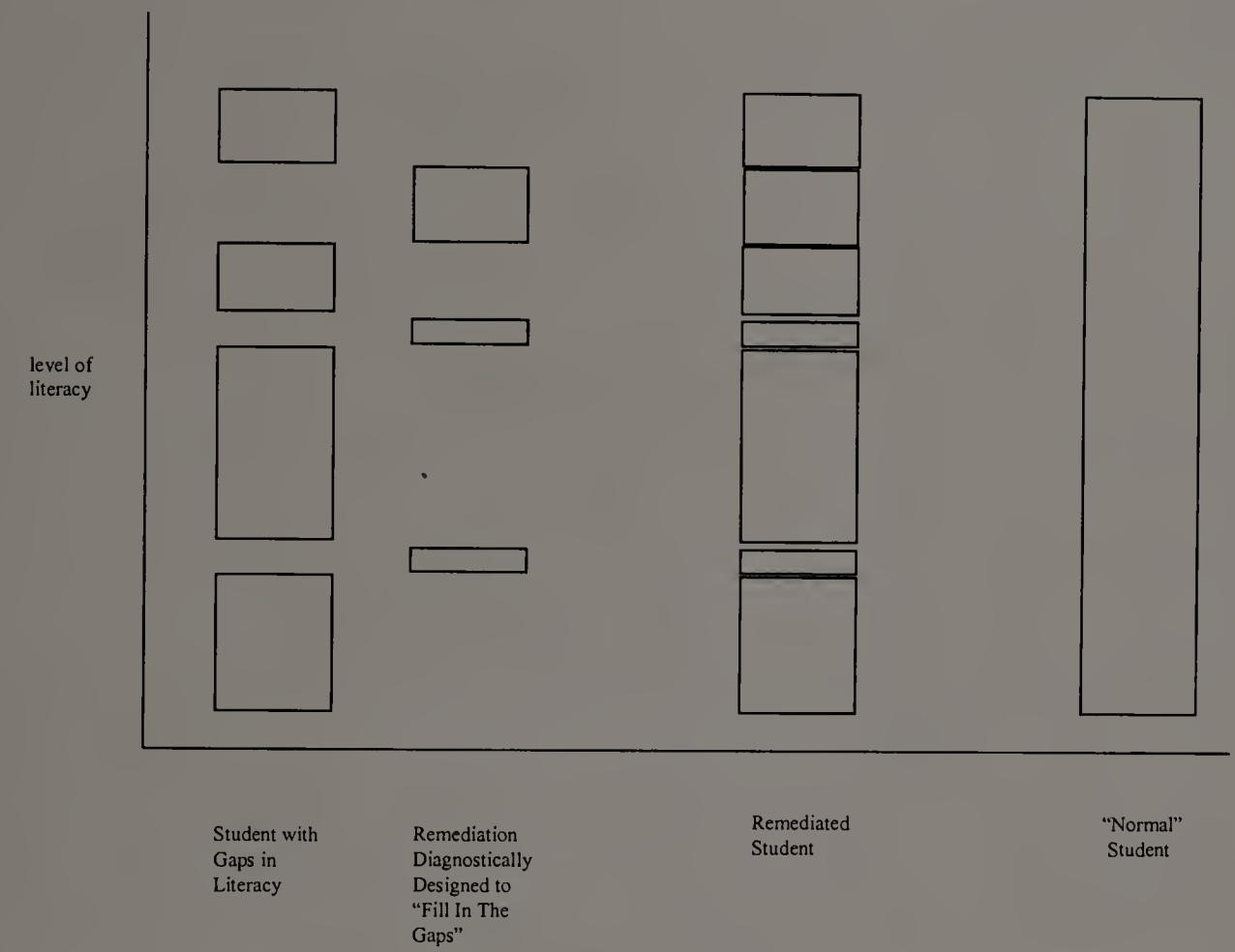
In my later constructive-influenced classes at PMC, I emphasized a discourse communities model as an alternative to the cognitive model. In this discussion I encouraged the students to consider why they want to go to college. I started the discussion by asking for the reasons why people want to go to college. Most groups answered this question similarly. My journal notes that my research class said: "to get money, to get a better job, to be successful, to learn." As we discussed this list, I tried to emphasize the current importance of going to college in our society. I asked, "what happens if you don't go to college?" They responded that they would have to work at low-paying jobs, that they would be failures. In the ensuing discussion I tried to make clear that this rather stark belief is not true. The students quickly related the dozens of examples of people who have succeeded who don't have college degrees. At the end of the discussion, it became clear that while a college degree is highly desired in our society, its absence is not the end.

This discussion sets the stage for a necessary step in the shift of literacy construction. My intent was to make this seeking of literacy ability a choice. I hoped

that the students would see seeking literacy ability as possibly outside of how it is often constructed in LD curricula. It can sometimes not be an attempt to heal a deficit.

An alternative model of literacy that stresses community membership was then explained. For this I created two charts that I placed on the overhead. On one I had the Learning Disabilities model. This consisted of a bar chart with four horizontal bars. The height of the bar was labeled literacy ability. Each bar had particular characteristics. One was labeled normal, and it reached to a high level on the literacy ability chart. The next was labeled LD. It reached high, but there were sections of the bar missing demonstrating gaps in literacy ability. The next "bar" was really sections of a bar positioned to fit the "gaps" of the LD bar. This was listed as the diagnosis of the missing literacy gaps of the LD bar that was next to it. The last bar was the "remediated" bar, which was the LD bar and the diagnosis bar placed together, but now with all the gaps filled in. It represented the remedial student who had now reached the appropriate level of literacy.

Figure 3: Traditional Learning Disabilities Model

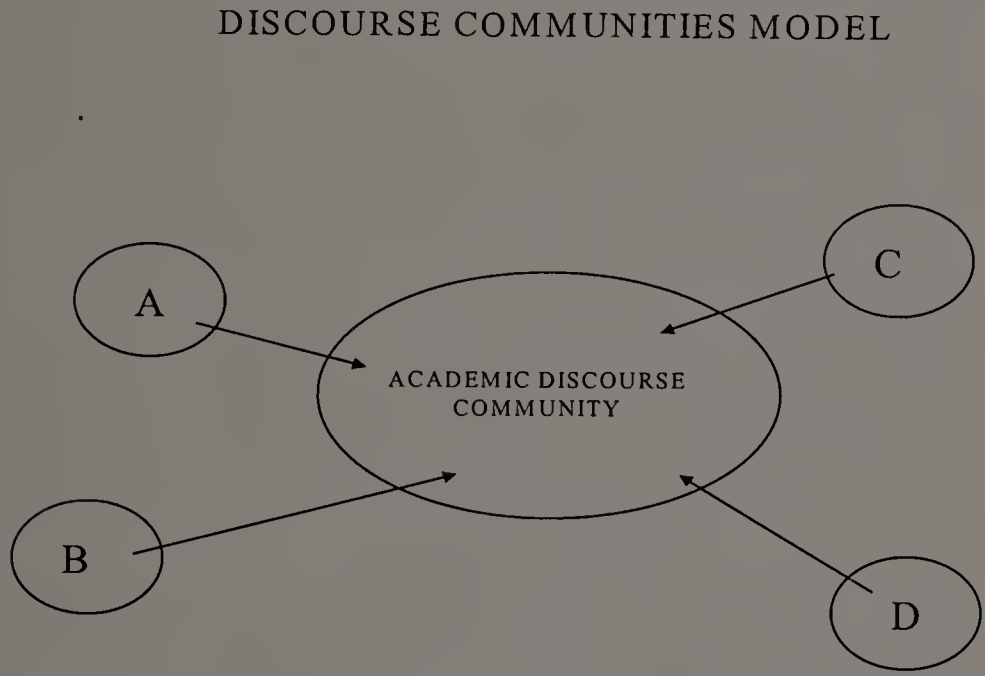


The alternative view is the discourse communities model. In this model I placed circles on the board. In one central circle I wrote academic literacy. I then wrote several other circles with arrows pointing to the academic literacy circle. I then tried to describe literacy from this perspective.

In this model sections of society were represented by letters, all attempting to enter the academic discourse community. Each letter may represent a section of society. "A" might mean LDL. "B" might mean people of color. Each has one thing in common; they are all seeking entrance into academic literacy. In the opening discussion of a

discourse communities model, I also noted how some constituencies have easier access to academic literacy. I noted how some parts of society already have many of the surface characteristics established as their social norms.

Figure 4: Discourse Communities Model



A convenient story I used to express this is used by James Gee (1990) who speaks of going into a biker bar and not knowing the proper way to talk. The issue from this rather humorous metaphor is clear. Membership in discourse communities, of any sort, requires a specific way of communication. Which discourse pattern is most valued in our society? Is it the biker bar community, or academic literacy? This discussion was intended to reveal that there are numerous "discourse communities" in society.

Academic literacy is one of them because we as a society value this form of literacy over others. I then asked, what then is the source of academic failure? Is it caused by the student or the school? The answer is obviously that it depends. This thread of the discussion allowed the class to discuss reasons for students to fail. The

differences of the two models provided a contrast at this point. On the LD side the belief is that the students have some form of disability. On the discourse communities side the belief is that there is something wrong, but that this misconnection could have many possibilities. The suggestion I was trying to make was the possibility of cultural mismatch and that this concept needs to be considered once the "normalcy" of academic literacy is removed.

I then told my students that I hate basketball. I related that I have always hated basketball but, as a youth, felt compelled to play. I emphasized that in that world I had a disability. I called it "disdribbula." There was no way that I could have ever been considered a "player" or a member of the sandlot teams that I participated in. What is the difference? How come I do not have a diagnosis of disdribbula?

My journal relates that the class was unanimous. I did not have a diagnosis because I could just choose not to play basketball. I could avoid the sport. Can you avoid literacy? Immediately they could see the point. I recalled in an anecdote a time shortly before this discussion where I took my children to the circus. I was surprised to read in the flyer passed out as I entered the tent that the clowns included their academic degrees after their biography. They would note how this particular clown had graduated from the UCLA School of Clowning and Circus Arts, or something of that nature. How is it that college, as represented in the academic credentials, has become so important that clowns feel it important to include their "credentials?"

The conclusion of the discussion served to contrast these world views. If literacy is not "normal," but instead the discourse patterns of the community that is using it, then a new understanding of their own "disability" is possible. I stressed to the class that what

they are trying to do is similar to what any person who is trying to join a new discourse community is trying to do. The students in the class are trying to gain entry into the academic literacy discourse community. This community is the valued literacy of our society. I related that while the students in the class have not experienced much success in academic literacy, they are not necessarily the ones at fault. I then stressed the purpose of this class was to make explicit the rules of this community which they were trying to join. This, I noted, is a genre approach and is very different from the other information-processing approaches that members had discussed. I told the class that I do not intend to throw out the skills of study skills, but will use them as the membership abilities that they must master for this community.

Genre Instruction as Glue

The structure that held these rather divergent class pieces together was genre instruction. It is this philosophical glue that, when added to the mix of pedagogical procedures, supplied the final push of the class into a constructivist-inspired whole. Genre, the final addition chronologically to my pedagogy, served to tie all the pieces together under one roof. It was added the previous semester during the pilot study of this dissertation, and served to contextualize the necessary skills as the literacy practices necessary for membership in the academic literacy discourse community.

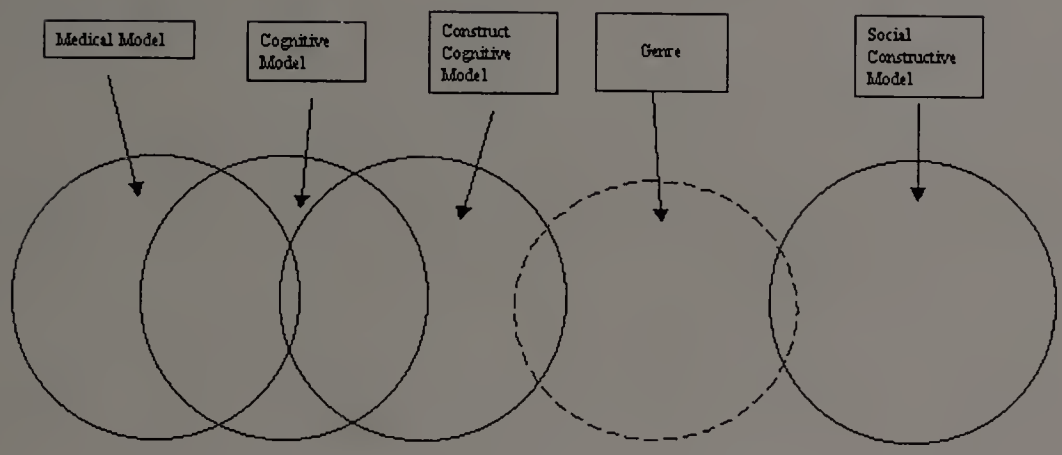
These combinations of research areas provide more than a literature review for this dissertation. In many ways this combination reflects my progression of learning from a cognitive perspective of literacy skill acquisition to a constructive perspective of

discourse community membership. This next text sequence, taken from a discussion during the LD section of the class, serves to demonstrate how I viewed genre instruction.

Teacher	They label you. You have the neurological problem and its …what I would argue as we go through each of the essays what I would like to do is read from each section of this construct and show how … What I would argue is that the medical model appears…it never really disappears, even though we claim to be really cognitive, in fact even at Piedmont. What do we do here? We diagnose you. Where do you go if you want to find out about your self…you go to "RxDx." I mean, that's really medical model orientated isn't it. What do you do in your tutorial? It is a remedial tutorial….isn't it….you get remediated there because you have a deficit in literacy. It is really medically orientated. However, we still use that cognitive processing within there still these models still communicate with each other. There is a great divide here, and then we get to the social constructive model. What you are participating in just to kinda put closure on this …
David	We are the renaissance
Teacher	You are the renaissance
David	We are the Genre. Ta da
Teacher	You are the genre generation, and I have a model which sorta represents that which might be kinda interesting just to look at. All of these models communicate with each other like this, this is where you are, as far as looking at genre. Let me quickly tell you how genre would fit into this whole thing. What you are trying to do then, is use the construct of the social constructivist as looking at literacy as not being neutral, that is a key idea by the way, literacy is not neutral, meaning that it is possessed or used in terms in terms of hierarchical social positioning. You can still teach it though, using the things which are informed over here, and kinda fill in the gap between the two discourse communities, because the way things are now, um there is literally no communication between the two and in fact in some colleges there is absolute open hostility towards learning disabilities um in the education faculty. I mean those folks are… the claim is we know what you do and you are bad people we know what you do

In this passage it is clear that I saw genre instruction as a sort of bridge between what I viewed as the cognitive and constructive paradigms in literacy instruction. This relationship becomes clearer when compared to the handout I used to augment this concept.

Figure 5: Paradigms in Remedial Literacy/Learning Disabilities



Villamain 1998

Genre for me held the promise of combining literacy instruction and providing the best of both the constructive and cognitive paradigms.

Conclusion

My goal in teaching my class was to change the students' literacy practice. I believed that because of the tie between literacy and identity, curriculum changes would result in not only increased literacy proficiency as measured against a target discourse community, but also in more empowered literacy identities, as measured by research analysis. My findings, however, revealed a much more complex relationship. My own understanding of the relationship was also part of the relationship.

Instructor constructions of literacy reveal a changing and growing pattern of literacy understanding. An analysis of my own teaching reveals a core of assumptions about literacy that changed over time. This changing aspect of my teaching is not a flaw with my approach. The dynamic quality of my instruction is best seen as the product of research and growth. It also provides the students with what is my own best understanding of a genre-based curriculum for LDL students.

The results of this research reveal not an "I was broken, but now I'm fixed" perspective and not a "now I'm a member in the academic discourse community perspective." Instead, I find that students drew upon multiple discourses in multiple ways as they negotiated their way through an academic experience. The cause for this negotiation can be explained from a broader examination of research findings beyond the limited view of "what this instructor intended."

Institutional Constructions of Literacy: An Introduction

Institutional constructions of literacy can be discerned by looking at several areas. First, it is necessary to look at the general history and culture of Piedmont College. This institution, because of its unique history, has a world view that is unique in education. Its history and its perceived place in academia, as we shall see, influence the world view of Piedmont.

Like all cultures, this institution is not homogeneous. Within Piedmont there is a dominant culture and several subordinate ones. While this phenomenon is not surprising, Piedmont's explicit goals and explicit literacy training make graduations in literacy

perspective more pronounced. It is simply a place where instruction is encouraged to follow the same patterns and follow the same inspiration. When that fails to happen, divergence is more noticeable. For this reason divergence from the central PMC pedagogical approach is seen as almost heresy by administration and "committed" faculty.

Following in this section is a brief cultural introduction to Piedmont. For this section I have chosen to describe the aspects of this institution that I feel bear direct relation to literacy and literacy instruction.

Piedmont Constructions of Literacy

The culture into which the students are drawn and in which they spend much of their time is unique in post-secondary education. Piedmont College, despite its relatively short period of existence, has evolved into a distinct entity with distinct effects upon student constructions of literacy.

The primary way literacy is constructed at PMC is linear, cognitive, and hierarchical. This belief is stressed in Piedmont pedagogy as accepted teaching practice and can be observed in many training documents. A training document from 1998 (Piedmont College 1998) describes "teaching principles and strategies" as:

- Begin instruction at point zero
- Micro-unit instruction
- Spiral back to previously learned concept
- Use a multi-sensory approach
- Provide frequent repetition and practice
- Diversify the set
- Model for the student.

In addition, this same document stresses breaking assignments down into logical steps, asking students to reverbalize the steps and suggests other cognitively inspired practices. These educational principles are the general operating procedures for the entire school. Because of the clarity of these approaches, and because of the general acceptance of their value, faculty evaluation and promotion are based upon a teacher's ability to implement theses teaching policies.

Evidence of this emphasis can be seen in many of the documents supplied to the students to aid them in self-understanding. Once again the "S.E.L.F." notebook provides insight into this. This notebook contains pages of diagnostic and procedural guidelines that are intended to aid the student in any academic area. It introduces itself by stating "This notebook is designed to help you better understand your unique learning profile and to set appropriate goals." It in part states as a goal of "self-understanding" that the student...

- Recognizes and accepts his learning disability
- Knows what the diagnosis is, what it specifically means in his case, and what the implications are for education, career, and other life activities
- Understands himself as a learner – knows his strengths and weaknesses and how they manifest themselves in the learning process

Clearly evident throughout this document is the PMC understanding of its mission and purpose. Students need to accept a diagnosis, and to follow its directives. This mission shift seems greatly at odds with a discourse communities model.

If the first base assumption of PMC is of a common cognitive definition of literacy, then the second assumption is of the universal model or the belief that certain

pedagogical practices used at Piedmont are superior and should be generally applied in all educational settings. This model is closely aligned to a cognitive or information-processing understanding of literacy acquisition. It is what is most usually referred to as the computer model of information processing.

This pedagogical creed is then directly applied to the suggested teaching practices at Piedmont. At a staff training session held in 1999, the VP for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College clearly stated the existence of this universal model. He noted the power of this instructional technique and how its presence is felt throughout the curriculum. In this model teaching is linked to "channels" of information-processing. Each student, through the use of diagnosis, has observable strong and weak channels. The teacher's task is to "remediate" the weak channels by teaching through the strong channels.

In 1998 the PMC Vice President testified before the US Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee at the request of the committee chairman, a local senator. In this testimony, the VP elaborated upon the institutional emphasis of information processing as an ideal model. He noted:

> Combined with this diagnostic teaching approach, an effective professional development program must cover an extensive range of prescriptive teaching methods, offering teachers alternative ways of teaching basic skills, and linking theses alternatives to their diagnostic understanding of students. For example, while some students may thrive in a whole-reading class environment, students with dyslexia require an approach to reading instruction that allows them to use hearing, sight, and touch as they practice linking sounds to their alphabetic symbols. ...It is essential that teachers have these approaches available to them (Gander, 1998).

As a result of these assumptions, teaching at Piedmont is very challenging. The classes that teachers instruct meet for four and one half-hours per week. While the classes are small, there is an expectation of detailed knowledge of each student by the teacher. At the pre-credit level, and also true at the credit level, expectations of student success are high. If a student experiences failure, a host of interventions occur to aid the student in the acquisition of the appropriate skill. It is extremely rare for students to fail at the pre-credit level at Piedmont College. Instead, an alternative grading system has developed based on the notion of internal placement.

Successful students at the 90 level advance to the credit level. Students who fail remain at the 90's level. This occurs despite any grade, or grade average, that the student might receive. There are plenty of examples of students who are getting A's in a class, but still fail to make placement criteria to the next level. This situation has made for ill will for many students who have misinterpreted grades for advancement criteria.

Despite these shortcomings, it is an advancement model that is reinforced frequently through staff training and workshops. It is also a model that did suggest success for a genre approach. I believed that an approach that stresses a social constructivist understanding of literacy practice could possibly provide an explanation. The possible disparity between grades earned, and presumably skills mastered, and advancement could create dissatisfaction for students. My field journal notes that this dissatisfaction could be the start of alternative explanations of literacy acquisition. It was actually my hope that this disparity could result in a questioning of diagnosis. This questioning could, I reasoned, result in alternative explanations of literacy and literacy acquisition. The juxtaposition of these alternative constructions of literacy placed

students in this research class in a difficult situation, however, one which required ability not only with literacy development, but also with political negotiation.

Institutional Influences on the Construction of Literacy: The Student

The Piedmont construction of literacy really starts before the admission process with students usually experiencing years of underachievement and of failure in school. The students, at some point in their academic career, become diagnosed with a learning disability. These first steps are significant because they are the first steps that place the student directly into the discourse of LD.

For some students diagnosis happens early. It is not uncommon for students to get their first diagnosis in or near first grade. Many also receive them late in their academic career. There have been several instances in which a student has related to me that he/she "didn't even know that they had a learning disability" until a few months before enrolling. These students in particular seem bewildered by the label. In common, however, is an experience of failure shared by virtually all of the student body.

This shared experience of academic failure becomes the first way by which the student body is divided at Piedmont. My experience with students is that you can divide them into two broad categories. The first is those who have internalized their diagnosis, and have come to accept the diagnosis that the LD community has given them. The other group is students who question, or are somehow in opposition, to the diagnosis.

This issue of acceptance of disability is significant for faculty at Piedmont and is significant for constructions of literacy. As a culture, at PMC the acceptance of student

disability is a requirement for full membership. This is not to say that there is a litmus test. However, there still remains an understanding on the part of faculty, and still quite evident in the training materials, that the controversy surrounding Learning Disabilities has been solved through research and that we as an institution have pretty much all of the answers. Acceptance of the diagnosis is the first step towards remediation. This pattern of acceptance is seen as more important than literacy ability or discourse community membership. As clearly stated in the S.E.L.F. notebook, students need a clear understanding of their learning style. When they have this they become a "confident self advocate and a life-long learner" (Piedmont College 1995).

Necessary for the admissions process is a set of tests. Currently the institution requires a complete ed-psych evaluation from an accepted outside tester, and this evaluation must result in a defined LD. The students arrive at Piedmont with much variety in diagnosis. It is possible to chart the changes in the diagnostic process by reviewing their diagnostic documents. When I first arrived at Piedmont in 1989, the predominant diagnosis was dyslexia. Over time, this diagnosis seems to have become much less prevalent. Numbers now favor ADHD, which was a diagnosis unheard of in 1990. At the time this research was gathered, this diagnosis made up almost 50% of the student population.

As an entering student comes to campus, he/she is faced with a second battery of admissions tests, including: The Peabody Picture Vocabulary test, The Slosson Oral Reading Test, The Gray Oral Reading Test, The Detroit #6 and Detroit #18, The Berea Visual-Motor Gestalt Test, an incomplete sentence test, an outlining test, and a copying test. These tests serve to verify the initial diagnosis and serve as a starting point for

student remediation. While faculty seldom employ these tests, frequently they are used to provide parents with a valuable starting point to assess change.

Department heads administer a third battery of tests before the students start classes. These tests are more informal and designed to result in proper placement in the credit or pre/credit classes. After this final institutional testing period, the students are assigned to classes and tutorials. One final testing sequence is initiated in the tutorial with the students. In this tutorial testing the student is evaluated in reference to the diagnostic checklist. This document is usually seen as being at the center of the tutorial remediation process. (See Appendix E)

Despite the variety of diagnoses and tests, PMC places students in classes and tutorials based mostly on reading level and writing ability. It is these criteria that are given the most weight in placement decisions. Classes of mixed diagnosis are common. Although homogenous groupings based upon official diagnoses are hoped for, most classes include all forms of LD and ADHD.

A significant part of this institution is the tutorial. These tutorials are in actuality one-on-one classes. The curriculum used in this class is devised from the official testing the student takes in the application process and from a procedure known as "informal testing." In this process teachers administer a series of tests divided into eight areas: oral reading, spelling, comprehension, study skills, oral communication, written composition, handwriting, and computer skills. Testing is designed to reveal areas in need of remediation in each of the categories. Once completed, this checklist becomes the focus of instruction and for the pre-credit student an independently operating class.

Present in this tutorial format is the hierarchal construction of literacy so evident in other areas of Piedmont curriculum. The tutorial checklist serves to document the literacy "problems" that the student has and provides a means of documenting their remediation. This document is probably the best representation of what Piedmont constructs as literacy. Its presence in tutorial as an assessment tool and as the model from which progress reports are written reveals the deep effect of the cognitive orientation upon pedagogical practice at PMC.

Institutional Constructions of Literacy: Controlling Discourses

Institutional constructions of literacy can be seen in several areas. One of the most useful areas for this research is the discourse surrounding students who find themselves in trouble. It is here that the discursive practices of the institution become most specific. It is also here that constructions of identity and of power are most clearly played out. When students experience academic or social trouble at Piedmont, a host of agents come into play. Interventions are organized, usually by the student's advisor, and the institution exerts pressure upon the student. The discourses surrounding Sarah are an example of this.

Sarah entered Piedmont in a crisis of sorts. She had initiated a lawsuit against her high school, and was actively seeking additional credits so she could get that diploma. Furthermore, Sarah was a returning student who had been asked to leave Piedmont the semester before due to low grades and absences. It was clear to her intervention team that Sarah was not engaging with the curriculum and was not buying in. Systems were

put into place, orchestrated by the advisor, to "ensure" success this time. The general belief was that "reporting" Sarah's "progress" would have positive results. This means that active monitoring and quick intervention would be necessary for Sarah to succeed.

Difficulty in getting to class seemed to be a continuing theme for Sarah, even in this new semester. As she entered the class I discovered that she was already on academic probation for excessive absences. My first record of this came from an unlikely source at Piedmont, Sarah's mother. I received a rare e-mail from her encouraging me to report Sarah's progress back home as much as possible.

Later, after continuing to acquire absences, Sarah was asked to attend a meeting with the deans about her high absences. This meeting resulted in a letter of "Academic Warning for Attendance" in addition to her continuing academic probation.

In March, she received another letter from the "disciplinary dean" which placed her once again on academic probation. This placement was due, it stated, to difficulties with "attendance and work completion" issues. This letter lists a series of behavioral outcomes necessary for Sarah to complete the semester:

> -You will discuss whether or not you should continue in your science class with [teacher] and your advisor.
>
> -You will use the resources available to you to promote your success. These include your tutor, advisor, RD, and the Center for Teaching and Learning.
>
> -You will meet with your advisor weekly to discuss your goals and to further develop strategies to promote your success here.
>
> -You will continue to check in with your RD.
>
> -You will meet with someone in Counseling Services on a regular basis

> -[Advisor] suggested you update your educational testing. She will continue to work with you and make a referral if necessary.

The letter closes with the suggestion, "please post this letter in a prominent spot so it can serve as a reminder of the expectations you have agreed to."

This letter is significant when viewed in reference to the underlying belief structure at Piedmont. Evident in this passage is the cognitive/behavioral belief that the source of the disability lies with the associated skills. In this letter Sarah is instructed to use the available "resources" and to develop "strategies." These remediation techniques are seen as necessary. Additionally, Sarah is encouraged to update her testing, so the emphasis upon accurate diagnosis is seen as equally vital. The closing of the letter further suggests that Sarah needed to internalize the truths as the institution saw them. The teachers and administrative staff associated with Sarah seek to have her work to internalize a list that contains more than a series of mandates. Contained in this list is a belief system that places Sarah into a position where her participation is controlled.

Through institutional discourse appropriate support systems are set in place to ensure that she accomplishes them. Evident also is the positioning and constructions of

behavior that go along with this discourse. Sarah is not capable of independent academics. She is monitored by home and by the institution. A list of "you will" statements stresses her relative lack of power and of free will. Sarah is placed in the context of this discourse of control, far away from the participatory discourse that the class was trying to foster.

Further examples of this controlling discourse can be found in many other institutional areas. Some examples of this pattern can be seen in the multiple letters sent

from advisors to advisees. Here, it is common to follow a meeting with a list of "accomplishments" that the student has "agreed" to. Furthermore, an examination of tutorial guidelines that promote systematic progress through the diagnostic checklist also suggests this discourse of student disempowerment. Gathered institutional artifacts such as training materials and procedural guidelines reveal a pattern of language stressing how "learning styles" and "strategies" need to be made "automatic." Advising and tutorial strategies as outlined in training documents suggest that information processing tactics should also be transcribed into the students' notebooks to be used later as strategies when academic difficulties are encountered. Literacy is reinforced as a set of skills that, when mastered, will result in an acceptable level of literacy ability. Students entering Piedmont are clearly subject to a variety of controlling discourses that seek to provide direction for the remediation process.

Institutional Constructions of Literacy: Departmental Constructions

As a department, Reading and Study Skills has an institutional reputation that is unique. This reputation is of deference to traditional cognitive practices. There are several reasons for this. I believe the biggest reason is that the department's mission is directly related to literacy acquisition. While this is true of all academic departments, Reading and Study Skills has as its focus reading "skills" in abstract without content. This fact requires the department to have a clearly articulated skills orientation to literacy. An examination of most Reading and Study Skills classes reveals a stratified approach to

literacy instruction. A list of 90's level class offerings from a 1997 department training document demonstrates this:

RS 091: Introduction to Study Skills (1st semester study skills)

- Students who enter Piedmont with decoding level above 8th grade or have taken 80's level courses
- Instruction to learning, reading and study skills; focusing on understanding of oneself as learner in relation to college level work

RS 092: Critical Reading

- Students who have taken 091 and need to improve critical comprehension of college-level material
- Examines reading as process supports learners in apprehending logic of the construction of prose and in making informed judgements concerning author's assertions and methods of presentation

RS 093: Critical Thinking

- Students who require further practice in processing thinking who have taken 091
- Course focuses on elements of critical thinking, elements of reasoning, and upper level thinking skills

RS095: Organizational Techniques

- For students who struggle with time management and organizational strategies (often appropriate for ADD students)
- Course focuses on supporting students in managing demands of PMC's course schedule and supports them in developing metacognitive self management

RS 096: Academic Research

- For students who need both review of study skills and micro-united approach to writing research papers
- Course presents a process for writing research papers from topic selections to footnoting

RS 097: Learning, Reading and Study Skills for Credit Students

- For students who enter PMC at the credit level
- Course focuses on high level reading, learning and study skills and in working with students on test preparation and writing research papers

Implied from this document is an understanding of the processes necessary for students to become viable college students. Constructive understandings of literacy

would argue that literacy cannot be taken apart and divided into differing elements. Here, in a more cognitive literacy approach, it is suggested that literacy is comprised of skills in reading, organization, memory, thinking, and research. Failure in the introductory class, RS091, results in placement in one of the other classes to allow the student to focus more closely upon the area in need of remediation.

All of these classes stress "micro-united" or small literacy tasks sequenced in a traditional hierarchy. Most classes use traditional study skills texts that employ decontextualized writing and reading tasks. An example of this type of text popular in the department is *College Reading and Study Skills* by McWhorter, (1995).

A document similar to the tutorial skills checklist is used as the focus of the goals of The Reading and Study Skills department (See Appendix F). It divides the course into 15 skill areas including: organizational skills, main ideas and details, two-column notes, active reading, summarizing, test-taking, vocabulary development, critical thinking, critical reading, classroom presentation, memory, listening, writing, and research. The clear agenda of this document is to provide a presentation of the component parts of literacy and to suggest avenues for remediation once the problems have been properly diagnosed.

The focus of this department is the skills component of the Piedmont curriculum as found on the Diagnostic Checklist. This institutional perspective has had an effect. This department has more of what a senior administrator calls the "old Piedmont" than any other department, meaning that there is more emphasis upon diagnosis and remediation. This in turn relates greatly to the general constructions of what literacy is and how students are treated in the process of becoming academically literate.

Student Constructions of Literacy: Introduction

In general terms, my class was an attempt to move a reading and study skills class beyond a metacognitive understanding of information processing to a more participatory understanding of membership in discourse communities. The general belief of Piedmont College is that metacognition is the goal of skills instruction. This belief is based upon the goal of transferability of skills to new literacy problems that the student is sure to encounter. The PMC belief is that metacognitive awareness will provide students with the "tool box" of skills that the student will then strategically apply. The suggested progression of PMC is then one of skills instruction, which leads to metacognitive awareness, which leads to a skilled writer. Consistent with this approach is the belief that awareness of the strength and weaknesses of the writer is necessary. A metacognitive writer then is a writer who is aware of his/her strengths or weakness, and has developed strategies to compensate for them. A weak speller, for instance, might develop strategies to review and revise spelling. A student who has difficulties with main ideas might have a checklist of revision steps with this item specifically listed.

Genre-based instruction is based upon production of knowledge rather than metacognition. A production of knowledge model stresses an apprenticeship or modeling relationship, which leads to knowledge production, which in turn leads to membership in an academic discourse community. This progression stresses membership as a goal of literacy. This model makes it less likely that students will substitute a form of procedural display (Bloome, 1989) for authentic participation. Procedural display relates to students going through the motions of an academic endeavor without really engaging fully. In this

case students with only a metacognitive awareness participate through application of skills and need not seek full participation in the target discourse. Production of knowledge and membership may occur, but this occurrence is not the direct intention of instruction. The direct goal of instruction is metacognition only.

This progression can be represented as a continuum as represented in figure 6.

Figure 6: Metacognition /Production of Knowledge Progression

As I have argued, traditional study skills curriculum emphasizes this metacognitive understanding of literacy as demonstrated by the surface understanding of academic literacy characteristics and by skills in a hierarchical understanding of literacy practice. Piedmont study skills curriculum is based on approaches that attempt to teach to metacognition as a means to reflect success with curriculum. Examples of this are in examination of the skills curriculum of other study skills classes or in an examination of the advancement criteria as discussed in the section Institutional Constructions of Literacy. These areas and numerous others reveal the metacognitive focus of most Reading and Study Skills pedagogy at Piedmont.

Students who experienced my reading and study skills class proceeded in a different manner. My class proceeded towards literacy understandings that were more harmonious with academic discourse. This pattern results in what I am calling production of knowledge. It is my assertion that this characteristic is necessary for

membership in academic discourse communities. For the purposes of this research project, I am using as evidence of production of knowledge particular rhetorical patterns within text. These patterns reflect agency, understanding of text, and understanding of self as benchmarks. Using this lens the following range of possibility results.

Table 7: Skills Model vs. Production of Knowledge Model

	Skills Model	**Production of Knowledge Model**
Presence of Opinion	Not usually present.	Stresses academic or evaluative opinion.
Role of Self (Agency)	Not authoritative. Reflects lack of agency. Usually not needed.	Seen as necessary to reveal dialogic presence in text and to express opinion.
Text Support of Opinion	Usually stressed as factual information to support summation.	Stressed as dialogic and as a necessary component to support academic opinion.
Membership	Not directly related	Goal of literacy participation
Disability	Defined as internal deficit.	Defined as mutually constructed incongruence between self and target community.
Understanding	Derived from critical thinking and developed as skill.	Derived from agreement with and supported by the target discourse community. Derived from membership.
Teacher/Student Relationship	Tends towards roles related to transfer of information from teacher to student.	Tends towards facilitator/participant.

My class substituted production of knowledge for metacognition and needed to reveal an alternative set of assessors to measure student progress. With this format it becomes clear that students taught with skill/metacognitive approaches have a fundamentally different understanding of literacy and literacy processing. Students who proceed from a

more constructive understanding, on the other hand, have a view of literacy that can be measured in relation to these critical issues.

The patterns present in the class members' constructions of literacy represent the general negotiations and successes that a constructivist-inspired class demands of students in this cognitive orientated institution. In the broadest view it is clear that a class like mine is somewhat in opposition to the dominant culture of the institution and this opposition of the class requires that the students use frequent posturing and negotiations to meet the divergent demands placed upon them. Additionally, it is also clear that students themselves enter the class with a somewhat organized idea about what they are hoping to accomplish in the class. From my field notes I indicate that the class seems ready to learn study skills.

Despite these outside factors, students are able to reach closer approximations to the norms of the discourse community they are trying to enter. Accordingly, in this next section I will present data centered on these findings. First I will discuss the multiple demands and their impact upon class members. Next, I will discuss the issue of initial surface understandings of the class and the change to a closer approximation to academic discourse. Finally, I will present student profiles to more clearly display patterns of literacy acquisition from start to finish in my class.

Student Constructions of Literacy: How Class Members Adapt to Multiple Demands

Running counter to my participatory construction of literacy was the department/institutional construction of literacy, a pattern supported by the general

culture of Piedmont. It manifested itself through staff training, institutional dialog, official documents, and through e-mail. It impacted students through other classes that they were in enrolled in, through tutorials and in the general interaction necessary in living in the Piedmont culture.

This construction proved to be significant. Although I did not realize it at the time, it has become clear to me that I taught my classes with the belief that I was somehow separate from the general culture. It was as if I believed that my class was somehow an autonomous region in the school and that connections between the two could be somehow severed. This proved not to be the case. All of my students had to negotiate the complex relationship created by a class that operated differently from the general institution.

David as Example. David provides a clear example of the negotiation needed in the class as members proceeded through the curriculum. This social negotiation, I believe, is associated with the maintenance of personal power and is a central theme of the student's experiences at PMC. Students want to maintain a sense of self in opposition to the institutional forces impacting upon them. In many instances, students could not simply adopt my new constructive approach. The impact of genre curriculum was not isolated to one class. Because of the general institutional culture students were forced to negotiate and fit the new curriculum into a complicated landscape. In this sequence a conversation between David and me takes place, a conversation that I initiated to determine the impact of the class upon the general institutional culture.

I initiated this conversation because during the preceding day a colleague had mentioned that David had experienced a change in behavior. There, according to the other instructor, was a noticeable decrease in effort and the development of a "bad attitude." This sequence is revealing not only because of its relationship to the institutional discourse but because it supports the finding that some students came with a previously established belief system in constructivism and that the class served as a confirmation for beliefs that were independent from both the institution and from the class.

Teacher	1. I was just curious if um, if you were having any difficulty in any of your classes? 2. Everything is ok, you're not like bumming out… 3. in like, Villemaire's class isn't sorta infecting some of the other people's approaches?
David	4. (Pause.) Well I think that one of the things that I struggle with is, you know 5. I kinda know what you want, in your paper. 6. What you're looking for in your teaching…
Teacher	7. Yea?
David	8. Then, it like it's hard for me you know 9. I am trying to appease you. 10. But then, I also, you know, what you're teaching me I can also bring to other classes and other papers and appease, use it in my papers. 11. Right now I'm doing a Kosovo argument on non-military action in Kosovo. 12. And you know I' reading a lot of opinion papers and I'm trying to extract that something and put it out…
Teacher	13. Good man, 14. that Krauthammer paper really worked for that.
David	15. (Garbled) but it still somehow, you know it is a different teacher, who I am appeasing, and are kinda looking for different things. 16. You know, but I'm also trying to use what you, you know, what's going on in here, 17. so I sorta struggle with that sometimes too.

In this sequence I set the stage for the discussion by immediately constructing the class as "outside" the regular curriculum and as possibly being corrosive. As clearly stated in line 3, I am worried about the pedagogical impact of the class, and there are really two reasons for this attitude. On one hand I had a fear that some of the class

procedures that I had been experimenting with were having the exact opposite effect from what I had intended. I feared that I could be impeding the learning of my students. I was also deeply concerned that the research committee could be about to assert its oversight function and cancel my study. In my mind at that time the outcome of the whole study was in the balance. Lines 13-14 reveal my rather cowardly attempt to tie the benefits of the class to the academic demands of the other teachers. I did this to reduce the possible objections to the class's curricular demands.

David responds by stating his difficulty is with multiple demands from multiple teachers. I understood this to mean that David felt that there was an inauthentic component of his "appeasement" of teacher expectations. David asserts that while he is able to find literacy practice transferability (line10), he notes that teachers are generally looking for different things (line 15). It is also apparent that other instructors are teaching in a way that is incongruent with the practices of this class (lines 15-17).

Evident here are the complex social negotiations necessary when alternative constructions of literacy collide. David's tutor had told me that he had been making progress with his decoding. She also had been working on his ability to locate main ideas and details. David felt that the constructions presented to him were gatekeeper discourses of equal importance. He hints in lines 10-12 that one is more authentic than the others. He states this seemingly using a constructivist argument, seeing the difference in approach, but that it still provides necessary backing in any class. He continues, however, noting that different teachers look for "different things." These different things were isolated skill mastery that simply were not emphasized in my curriculum. He nevertheless feels

that his current position is to survive within both discourses. One was not an aid for the others; in fact, both seem at times autonomous.

It is also suggested in this passage that students attempt to remain autonomous and powerful in their daily procedures in school. Resistance to the dominant discourse, either in class or out of class, frequently results in diminished personal power. Students who don't behave get into trouble. This happens within the class and outside the class because of the controlling discourses of both the class and the institution. While it was easy for me to see the difference in discourses, the students, I am afraid, often saw class discourse as another demand to be negotiated through or even resisted.

At the time that I gathered data for this study I seemingly had little understanding of the power these competing discourses held for my students. Subsequent interviews with students in the class revealed to me just how powerful the institutional construction of literacy is. Even in the most constructive thinking students seem to draw predominant cognitive lessons from the class experience once they graduated on to more "traditional" PMC courses. Tom, in his final interview before moving on to Piedmont credit classes, was able to articulate his usual "learn how to play the game" construction of literacy while still referring to the importance of skills instruction. He notes:

Teacher	1. Ok. Um, do you have spin-off effects of this class? 2. Are there techniques that we developed in the class, or?
Tom	3. Definitely, like my master notebook. 4. I use that a lot, and then um, just like my active reading, 5. like I learned a lot of it in your class, but then, 6. I was lucky that I got her, um Miss Staffing, cuz now that she assigns so much reading 7. I've really thank… I use it a lot and so like, like I cemented how I do it 8. and my style for doing it.

	9. And I get faster and better at it as I go.
Teacher	10. Yea, nothing like practice to make it better, 11. having to go through the shorter essays really lends it self, especially with a book like that which doesn't have chapter breaks or anything, 12. its not like bold-face or anything in there right?
Tom	13. Yea.
Teacher	14. So….
Tom	15. And I have had like two or three teachers like, 16. you know they give like summary assignments, 17. and like they are real easy for me now.

In this text sequence I question Tom about the spin-off effects of the class. I prompt the answer, and suggest a direction by using the term "techniques." Tom responds by indicating the skills that he felt to be most significant in the class (lines 3-4). Later, however, he seems to shift back to a more constructive understanding of the class by indicating that because of his understanding of academic structure, a main component of the class, he is able to read in a "faster and better" way (line 6-8). He indicates that his style (line 8) is now more developed and more useful. This suggests that Tom, like David, is negotiating the differing demands of the class and institution.

Student Constructions of Literacy Practice: Surface vs. Deep Understanding

This interplay of institutional and instructor constructions of literacy are the background. For me, another significant aspect of literacy construction are the findings associated with the students within the class. It is to this area of data gathered within the class that this dissertation now turns.

One of the first patterns evident in an evaluation of student data is that students seem to have surface understanding of the features of academic literacy upon entry into

the class. This surface understanding is explainable. After all, all of the students in the class have participated in school literacy tasks all of their lives. This training, however, seems to have only given part of the answer to the students. It seems clear that introductory information and early class tasks were not entirely new. On the contrary, all of the class members had had extensive training, but this training seems to stress a non-membership or a rhetorical "recipe" approach that did not lend itself towards true participation.

This can clearly be seen in the work of Nick. In his first class paper, a response to my assignment to write about his definition of a college paper, Nick presented a hand-written paper that appeared to be hastily done. In one sentence he states his idea of what an academic paper is. He notes, "I think an academic paper is a paper that has a concrete structure with a hypothesis intro, explanation, and a conclusion. This is the way I was taught to write an academic paper."

This passage does reflect an understanding of what it is like to write in college. Nick seems to already understand one of the course's main components, which is an emphasis on structure. Here he is acknowledging the importance of this feature and, to some extent, reflecting structurally this understanding. He demonstrates a rudimentary structure that sequentially presents his ideas. He also follows the class convention of using "I" in his text.

Perhaps as a challenge, Nick didn't stop there. He states,

> There are also free written papers which I believe have no format, just a main topic. As example of a free written paper is this one. These are two of the types of academic papers I know of. Have a nice day.

Here Nick goes beyond the assignment to demonstrate knowledge that is essentially not sanctioned by the class. Yes, he is indicating that he has a working knowledge of academic papers. Also included, however, is his understanding of additional "academic" genres. He seemingly intends to thwart the intended aim of the assignment with this section of text by indicating that he is refusing to completely follow what was instructed. My main intent in assigning him to academically write an "academic paper" was to see what he already knew. Nick's reply was in his assertion that "As example of a free written paper is this one." Here Nick is asserting that the teacher may have an agenda about writing but that his own ideas of appropriateness of genre are valid as well.

My goal in assigning this essay was to see what kind of writers I was getting and what their knowledge was of the genre that they were writing to. It seems that Nick, like most of the others, knows approximately what sort of writing I was talking about.

David also shares a surface understanding of academic literacy. In his first paper he notes:

> A college essay needs to have a Date, Title and double Spaced Lines. There will be a topic sentence that tells the reader what will be expressed in the three paragraphs to come. These paragraphs will give detail and meaning of the points of the paper. These points should biulded [sic] off one another and conclude in a final ending sentence.

As with Nick, David already comes to the class with an understanding of the general structure of the essay. He is also aware of the "look" this essay must have, possessing a heading and even having double-spaced lines. There is even a suggestion of structure

when he suggests that the points should build off one another and work toward a final conclusion.

These understandings seem typical in this class. All were responding in part to the introductory comments I had made in the first meeting of the class when I had tried to introduce to them the basic parts of what I hoped to accomplish in the class. I had stressed the structural component of academic literacy using a bridge metaphor. Here I stated that, similar to a bridge, an essay needed a structure that "holds it up." This structural feature is partially what makes it acceptable to the community that they will be writing to. This structural component is evident in nearly all the essays.

While many students were able to comprehend structural or surface features of academic literacy immediately, this connection was not of course true of all the students. Sarah failed to even hand in a paper on this subject. She explained that she "had no idea" about what I had wanted and instead showed me evidence of writing from another class. While this satisfied my primary desire to ascertain her relative writing ability, it also revealed how unclear, or possibly threatening, academic literacy was as a concept to some of my students.

While students shared this understanding of surface characteristics of academic literacy, it was not the end of literacy development in the class. Conclusions that can be drawn in an evaluation of this early data are that the students were mostly well aware of the surface literacy demands of the academy. This knowledge, however, did not help them in mastering the academic requirements. For some reason, this initial "surface" understanding did not develop further.

For me it was clear that one more additional course using the same old methods would not result in substantial literacy gains that I was seeking. The essays of entering members of my class were halting, cited no text, and failed to have a recognizable linear argument.

This was more than a skills deficit issue. These students already had had extensive training in the "skills" of academic literacy, but this training had somehow still left them out. My hope at the time was that a genre-inspired approach would supply the needed push to help these students obtain the literacy practices of the academy.

Closing In On The Prize: Students Are Able To Exhibit Closer Approximations Of Academic Literacy

The focus for this section is an evaluation of data concerning the shift from metacognitive goals such as information processing awareness and understanding and ownership of diagnosis, to production of knowledge goals such as higher levels of participation, increased use of agency, increased presence of opinion, and increased use of textual support. In this section I will review student goal statements from admission data and student papers looking for examples of this transition.

The students in this study were able to reach a high level of participation as seen in the later papers produced. An examination of the subject positions used in the creation of their text, of the participatory attitude exhibited, and in the ability of the student to produce knowledge, reveals participation and academic achievement.

Success in this area fell upon a continuum. At one end are Tom and David. These students seemed to demonstrate a deep understanding of academic literacy. Included in their texts is evidence of agency and of textual support. Lacking in their texts are examples of procedural display. Because of this, both can be said to have produced knowledge. Nick also demonstrated these characteristics. His papers differ only in content and degree. Nick represents a belief that skill possession alone can account for discourse membership, even while he increasingly adopts a constructivist voice in his writing. Sarah is at the opposite end of the continuum. Her papers, while still academic in surface structure, seem to lack deeper features such as agency and textual support. They instead suggest a form of procedural display indicating that she did not totally understand the thrust of the class and did not fully derive benefits from participation.

David. David entered Piedmont with several metacognitive goals. He stated in entrance interviews that he "wants to look at his learning disability." He also mentions in this interview that he " thinks (PMC) will look at my strengths and acknowledge and support those strengths by fine-tuning and addressing them intensely." David's construction of the goals of this learning, then, is an increased self-understanding and a training of skills to allow him to succeed academically. My research notes indicate that David seemed quite satisfied in the skills section of the class. I believe that he did address these metacognitive goals. The second section of the class, however, provided him with a different goal of facility with academic literacy.

David is able to claim an approximation to academic literacy after participating in the course. David in some ways began the class closer to the class ideal of literacy practice, but also experienced some of the most personal difficulties in realizing it.

There are numerous examples of David's facility with academic writing throughout the course. David offered an interesting presentation of the final synthesis paper. I had been concerned that this task would prove to be too much for him. My notes record that he seemed worried with this "bigger" paper. I was pleasantly surprised when he turned in the following thesis:

> Charles Krathammer writes short essays for Time Magazine. His writing is often controversial; it tends to lean toward social issues related to race, gays, and government policy. In many essays Krathammer is generally effective at getting the reader to start to think about topics in an open-minded way, often using compare and contrast. Then he presents an effective persuasive solution to the issues. In his solution, however, he tends to think in a nationalistic, conservative way. This can be very manipulative to a socially progressive reader because Krathammer uses a technique of fooling the reader into thinking that he is presenting both sides of an issue equally. Then he veers off to an extreme example or point that usually supports his conservative views.

David is successful in citing text to support his view. In a section where he is discussing the "AIDS Essay," he notes:

> He comes up with interesting points about Aids being a well-publicized illness, due to the young and famous people that have died from this disease. But what he attempt to persuade the reader in thinking about aids, is that it is not societies problem because the aid illness is mostly in the aids community and that will stay in this community. This is false and what Krathammer overlooks … is that is not strictly in the Aids community and millions of people outside the gay community have and are likely to contract this wide spread disease.

While David clearly has grammatical problems yet to solve, his writing clearly uses source text as a support for an assertion that he is making. He closes his discussion with the following:

> Charles Krathammer is a persuasive essayist that can have an influencing view on social issues. Often he does not give the reader a clear picture of the issue he is discussing and often misleads a reader with an extreme conservative view. He is good at what he does and has interesting points, though his knee-jerk reactions based on his preconceived view could be more compassionate in terms of human issues and his opinion can be shorted sighted in the complex world.

Evaluating this text reveals David to have established himself as an academic writer. He is successful in producing knowledge by creating an original thesis that he is indeed able to support using textual sources. He notes on the feedback form that he felt that he had a "clear linear progression supporting my thesis." He is also becoming clear about what is needed for him to be able to produce text. He stated in a feedback form:

> I still rely on gaining knowledge by discussions and by experiences in life and by hands on learning. I do believe this is mostly how I have gotten to know what I needed to survive in the world. But if I want to get more out of academics I will have to apply what I have gained in study skills class this semester. Which I believe I am learning here in class.

He also noted that he decided to focus his evaluation upon a point from student paper presentations.. This choice further indicates that David is assessing the text he is to evaluate in a strategic sense. This systemic procedure of textual evaluation is in agreement with the class construction of academic literacy. David was asked to participate in the discourse that the author initiated. David did not engage in a procedural display of academic literacy. Like the author, David meaningfully cited text, provided an

assertion, and followed this up with support. This participatory stance was at the heart of the class objective.

Tom. Tom enters the class with the least amount of evidence of metacognitive goals from his admission interview. Even in his entrance interview there is evidence of Tom's distrust of his diagnosis. The interview notes how Tom, "says that he has always been suspicious of the diagnosis of ADD—says a lot of student who have bad grades get diagnosed with ADD." He is later noted as saying that, "he has never been quite sure if he wasn't lazy." This attitude was not evident in my notes as I started the class, however. If Tom was "suspicious," he kept this fact to himself and was at least willing to listen.

In the skills section of the class there is little evidence of Tom's acceptance or rejection of the information that I was giving. I noted his quiet participation in the class. His participation grew dramatically, however, when we entered the paper-writing section of the class and this became clear when I compared my early notes, which did not contain many references to Tom to my later transcripts, which had numerous entries by Tom.

Tom was able, in nearly all of the papers handed in during the semester, to write academically. The final series of papers in the essay evaluation session reveals that Tom was also able to increasingly engage in higher levels of academic literacy. Clearly evident in his papers are a participatory attitude and production of knowledge. This is especially true in the final month of the class.

This pattern became clear in the essay assignment requiring Tom to relate Arthur Schlesinger's "Cult of Ethnicity, Good and Bad," and Michael Kinsley, "David Duke and the American Decline." In this essay assignment Tom chose to support an assertion

made by Michael Kinsley about the social glue which has allowed us to socialize into one nation. For Kinsley, the social glue is economics and prosperity. Tom deeply agreed with this rather stark assertion about America. This notion of the reason why America is successful in working together is in contrast to Arthur Schlesinger's. Tom notes:

> Why would a people stick together and get along so good if there is not melting pot? Because everyone is making money. In America the economy has been growing since day one. In a country where the economic pie grows continuously, lie the US, there is not reason to steal other people's slices.

In this passage Tom notes not only his opinion of the important connections between the papers, but also his own opinion about the process of socialization in the United States today. At the close of his argument Tom notes,

> …of course Kinsley was wrong about America's economic slide from grace. This causes many people to dismiss his ideas. I believe however that Kinsley was right for the most part, he just may have gotten his timing wrong. No country can prosper forever however, and although another economic boom may have chased away David Duke; he will be back, maybe tomorrow, different name, maybe a different skin color, but he will undoubtedly be spewing the same rhetoric.

In this passage Tom demonstrates his ability to go beyond the surface of the text and evaluate it in a highly sophisticated way. He has with this essay demonstrated that he is capable of producing knowledge, and that he feels somewhat comfortable doing so.

Tom was able to further demonstrate this ability in the final argument (Krauthammer) paper which required Tom to find his own theme and articulate it with the support of a number of essays. In his essay he notes that he was unaware of the world

of op-ed. He stated that he discovered that essay-writing was a "secular field" of writing just like "poetry or novel writing." He went on to state:

> And just like any field of work there are standouts. Just like the world of professional basketball, the world of essays has stars. After reading different authors and exploring the world of essay I soon come to the conclusion that without a doubt Charles Krauthammer was the Michael Jorden of opinion essays.

Tom then goes on in this essay to cite additional sources that I did not require, and making these intertexual links demonstrates how much understanding Tom has of this expository genre. The work that he put into the paper made the writing of it easier, he stated to me. When he was asked after the paper what he liked about it, he replied, "I like the fact that I got it done and that I actually has something to say."

Nick. Nick is also a good example of a strong participatory pattern in class discourse. Nick is different than the previous two examples because he is able to do this while still maintaining skills based literacy understanding.

When asked during his entry interview about his goals, Nick replied, "PMC is going to help me utilize my strengths and turn my weaknesses into strengths." He goes on to note that he wants PMC to, "Teach me about who I am and how I can be better." His metacognitive goals became clearer when he noted, "PMC can help me in educating myself about ADD. I have been told that [the program] can help me learn solely what my strengths and weaknesses are and take both and bring them up."

Nick's enthusiasm for the LD or cognitive orientation is understood in reference to this entry interview. It is clear that with his firmly established metacognitive goals his

expectation was that his current study skills class was going to offer more training in skills acquisition.

If anything, however, my field notes indicate that Nick was almost bored by the skills section of the class. I note in my journal several times where Nick was eager to debate and move away from simple skills instruction. My notes indicate that my initial belief was Nick was poised to adopt a more constructive orientation. I note that, "he has a good understanding of academic structure and seems to understand how valued it is in college writing."

Like the other members of the class, Nick was also able to adopt a production of knowledge orientation in his writing. From the performance of early essays it seemed that Nick was well prepared for the final papers requiring him to put all the processes together into one paper. In the paper comparing Charles Krauthammer's "Holocaust: Memory and Resolve" to Michiko Kakutani's "When History is a Casualty," he was able to create a novel thesis of being unable to understand how anyone could doubt the Holocaust. He notes, "I find it hard to believe that someone could not believe in the Holocaust with all the evidence to prove its occurrence." Here Nick is successful in making a clear argument that suggests a direction. He is successful later in the paper supporting his opinion with text.

In the final paper Nick seemed to falter, but only for computer reasons. Apparently, in this essay the school's computer system failed and Nick's paper was one of the casualties. He handed a paper in on time and actually two hours later handed in a briefer paper, without the control codes embedded in his text. It seems that the computer was reluctant to print out his draft and was also reluctant to save it. The result for Nick

was a rather dirty long copy and a clean brief one. I can only guess what the paper would have looked like if he had not run into this difficulty. As it is, the papers can still be evaluated for their content, although there are certainly gaps and rough spots.

This paper is interesting because it contained evidence of the continuing desire to equate literacy and skills while still possessing the necessary academic features. His emphasis upon Krauthammer's knowledge of "all the facts" suggests a knowledge as possessor of information approach. In his introductory paragraph Nick notes:

> Charles Krauthammer is an article writer for Time Magazine. Krauthammer is a master of persuasive writing. After reading an essay by Charles Krauthammer a person may agree with him in this thesis because he is so persuasive. Krauthammer appears to know all the facts and have a solution for everything. But, those of us who are well academically literate are able to see errors and persuasive tricks in his work. What error and persuasive tricks are in his work? Errors and persuasive tricks like a lack of facts and false facts, false dichotomies, hidden agendas, and his America is the supreme ruler attitude.

This passage is informative about Nick's understanding of literacy practice. Most prominent is Nick's assertion that he himself is now "academically literate." I have puzzled over this comment and have spoken to him about it. My first guess was to think that Nick was providing some ironic commentary on the subject, but after speaking to him, I was not so sure. It seemed clear that he did feel that he was trying to write as an insider and this construction was one way to make that assertion clear. I did indicate that this claim in such overt means seems to cast doubt. It was a little like bragging or stating something that a person cannot claim alone. Nick was not deterred and insisted that it is what he meant. This practice, I believe, further revealed his uncertainty with the notion of membership.

At the end of this passage, Nick makes the statement the source essays contain "errors and persuasive tricks like a lack of facts and false facts, false dichotomies, hidden agenda and his America is the supreme ruler attitude." In this passage Nick sets himself the task of evaluating the essays with a clear roadmap of what he will cover and what he expects to find. With this, he is accomplishing an important part of class-supported requirements for academic writing. He has created an original argument and is participating in dialog with the author.

If assessed using the concept of production of knowledge, Nick is able to participate in academic literacy. Even though he persists in viewing literacy using cognitive definitions, he, by membership in class dialog, is forced to voice his opinions. The result of this phenomenon is that Nick, by virtue of his participation in the class, is again forced to adopt the constructive voice that he is at times rejecting. Nick presents a pattern of approximation of academic literacy. For Nick, membership in academic literacy remains a set sequence of skills that in themselves represent membership.

Sarah. Sarah presents the final category of student performance. She also represents something of an enigma because, compared to the other members of the class, she seemingly generated far less research data. She is also different from the other students because her average for the first several weeks of the class was failing. We were three weeks into the course before Sarah was able to hand in anything. This was after I negotiated away the first writing assignment, describing a college essay, to allow her more time on the other more curriculum-based assignments.

While Sarah's metacognitive orientation is less documented in the early parts of the class, it is made up for by the abundance of data from the class itself. Throughout the paper-writing section of the class, she articulated a disposition for skills as a goal. In an interview in April, I asked her about her diagnosis. In reply she noted to me:

> Yea, but like I don't know, like, with, my learning disability is like I've noticed this is ah, like this, the reason why I feel about how I have dyslexia, dyslexia or whatever, is like I can tell that in like my writing or my typing, like I have to go back and I'm like (laugh) it makes me so mad, I'm like, I'm going to fix this, I'm going to fix this or whatever, like I'll put like, I even do it sometimes in my name. You know, like, switch the letters around. You know?

Sarah entered the class with the intent to "fix" the problem that she faced with literacy processing. This fix, she has been taught, has to do with the skills of going to school. It is from this place that Sarah participated in the class.

In February Sarah handed in the first two assignments at the same time, both almost identical. In neat handwritten script Sarah met the letter of the assignment. Both successfully met the requirements of the summary format. There seemed, however, an almost mechanical sound to her script, as if she was able to turn this most formulaic of essays into something worse. While it was easy for her to implement the structure of a summary, pulling together a reaction paper requiring her to state an opinion would be harder.

As an example, in the flag essay Sarah's response to the incessant questions of Frank Trippet was simple. Rather than developing a opinion, she simply responded in support of flag anti-desecration laws. Thus it seems that Sarah missed an important part

of the assignment; she was simply answering the questions. Also, she seemed to have a somewhat surface understanding of the text. This pattern can be seen in the following:

> Protesters along with citizens have no right to burn anything that symbolizes the U.S. and or its flag. It is without a doubt a crime, well it should be even if it was meant as a prank or a joke it is still vandalism. Singing the national anthem off key isn't a crime because not everyone sings perfect. Should one be able to burn the U.S. constitution? No. enough said.

This rather surface understanding of the text continues into the later essays. These essays seem to suggest that Sarah can indeed read text and can see generally what the author is saying. What she failed to do, however, was engage in the essays in a way that would suggest that she was seeing them in an "academic" participant way. Sarah notes on a feedback form that she had to adapt her writing process as the class developed. She noted that she "changed [her] process repeatedly…." While this suggests that she was being forced to write in a more academic way, she attributes her difficulty to this shift in process only. She notes… "I think that's why my paper ended up being difficult for me." She also notes several times that she did not find the topic "interesting."

While I could see some development in the writing Sarah was able to produce during the course of the class, I was losing ground in the area of grammar and syntax. As her meaning increased, I began to see evidence of poorer grammatical work. I feared she would return to not handing in work. Even her meaning seems predicated upon a surface understanding of the text, and I was unsure how to get her beyond this stage. My hope and my curriculum were based upon incremental growth from the first essay through to the last. Sarah, with her late papers, and her handing them in in groups, circumvented

this process. While it is true that I could see progress in her writing, the progress was less than what I thought necessary to make the class a success for her.

It is for these reasons that I was especially pleased with Sarah's work with the final paper. While it lacks some of the critical attitude and depth of understanding that I was working towards, it still demonstrates growth and an increased understanding of the task of writing academic essays. In this essay Sarah writes about the hidden agenda she sees in the essays. Hidden agenda is one of the thesis essays that I had discussed and modeled with the students. In this first paragraph Sarah related her understanding of this concept and what she was intending to write about in her essay:

> It only takes reading a few of these essays by Charles Krauthammer to find a pattern to his writings. His writing is very interesting. It usually takes getting at least a fourth of the way through one of his essays before the reader is on the right track of what his hidden agenda is. Is he for prohibition or against it? Does he approve of gay marriages or not? Charles Kruathammer makes his readers stop and think about the subject they are reading and he makes his readers interested in finding his 'hidden agenda.'

Evident in this passage is an increased awareness of argument and of thesis development. I wondered if she was not supporting an argument that was her own. I had proposed a similar thesis in a class discussion when she expressed difficulty with the paper. Her construction of hidden agenda suggests that she is following what the class decided, or perhaps she chose one of the more "do-able" essays from class discussion. In any event, while Sarah doesn't seem totally dedicated to this idea, she is more able to support it than in any of her earlier essays. This tentative understanding is revealed in the closing section from Sarah's paper:

> Krauthammer is an excellent writer for many reasons. He doesn't just stick to his own points of view and opinions, he takes others views into account as well. Which is an important piece to writing. He doesn't just stick with his opinion. He really makes his readers think, which also catches those skeptics by surprise and sucks them into the issue. Could this be his "hidden agenda?" That is just one question that all must ask when reading his articles. But the following views and points made in this paper are what I, the reader, found was his "hidden agenda."

Suggested here is an understanding that Sarah was to make an assertion that made sense to her and to support it with data from her source text. She seems to recognize that others might not totally support what she was saying but that her opinions are still valid. Taken in the context of her other papers, this represents significant progress in being able to write to this genre.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Sarah herself did not discern any change in this text from the others. When asked to describe her writing process she noted that, "first I read a majority of all the essays and highlighted them (margin noted) in the pack. Then I associated them together." When asked if she did anything different in the process, she replied, "not really." When she was asked what she liked about this paper she replied, "it was easy to see how Krauthammer writes."

Conclusions

LDL students seeking entrance into the academic discourse community face a daunting task. Study of literacy constructions reveals complex and competing definitions of literacy. These definitions emerge from the differing participants that have influence in the class. These participants are more than the students and the teacher. The influence

of more distant discourses such as the institution and of definitions that influence the actual participants all impact the constructions of literacy within the class. This chapter attempted to sift through these competing constructions.

An examination of data reveals patterns in the constructions of academic literacy. First, the teacher entered the class and research site with what was then believed to be a firmly established understanding of what literacy was and how the students could get it. Analysis of the relevant data points out, however, that this understanding was itself the product of an increasingly evident transformation in beliefs which served to direct the changes in the class curriculum. These changes explain the format of the class with its seemingly awkward transitions from skills, to essay, to Learning Disabilities curriculum. Unifying these course sections is genre. Genre-inspired philosophy, which incorporates the philosophy of constructivism while still utilizing the skills of the cognitive approach, brings these sections together as a unified whole.

The students also reveal patterns of construction as they proceed through the course. The students entered the classroom with varying constructions of what academic literacy is. From this initial definition the students attempted to cope with the increased demands of a more participatory culture. Each student then proceeded through the curriculum and revealed an individual construction of academic literacy. This section provides evidence that serves to strengthen understanding of the complexity of literacy acquisition. Students clearly are not progressing in a progressive skills-in-a-hierarchy process. Instead, they are struggling to join a new community that values a literacy pattern in which they are not well versed.

Also evident after evaluation of the data is the influence of the philosophy of Piedmont College. The institution is present in the research as a powerful and persistent alternative constructor of what literacy is. This pervasive presence could not totally be controlled and did affect the students' developing understanding of literacy. It exerted powerful messages about who gets literacy and how it is used. In many ways constructions within the class constitute a weaker voice when compared to the larger and repetitive voice the institution exerted.

These literacy patterns of the class presented the students and teacher with both a problem and an opportunity. The problem the students had to negotiate was the divergent message that this class was giving them. How could literacy be both skills and membership? The problem the teacher faced was how to maintain a constructive curriculum in the face of repeated institutional demands. The solution worked out by these participants is individual and reflects the individual nature of literacy acquisition.

Also revealed is the relationship between procedural display and production of knowledge. If metacognition is the goal of a cognitive/skills approach, then acceptable work produced from this model can resemble procedural display. If production of knowledge is the goal, then membership or participation in the target discourse group is the desired end. The reason for this is that in the skills approach, the skilled writer might not be fully participating in a discourse community. Because of the flawed identity necessary in the understanding of disability, full membership becomes less likely. If membership in academic communities is based upon production of knowledge, then participation is impeded since information must be sanctioned from another authority.

CHAPTER 5

STUDENT CONSTRUCTIONS OF IDENTITY

Chapter Overview and Introduction to Identity

Also present in the development of literacy are issues associated with identity. Usually these issues is not examined or seen as relevant in skills-based literacy instruction because failure to acquire literacy skills is usually seen as a cognitive failure. This research, however, reveals a tie between literacy and identity that demonstrates the challenging nature of literacy development for students labeled Learning Disabled. As these students develop literacy, they also had to cope with the corresponding changes in identity, and this, in turn, impacted the process of literacy acquisition. The data gathered for this dissertation reveals a complex relationship between literacy and identity (Bartholomae, 1986) that has generally been overlooked by cognitive approaches.

Because of my constructive orientation, I expected that students would simply "trade in" one identity for another. I believed that when presented with a perspective on literacy that offered relief from what I considered the oppressive cognitive orientation, students would eagerly join the new perspective. Research gathered for this study demonstrates that this trade-in failed to happen and that a more complex relationship is apparent. Through an examination of student subject positions and of student choice in discourse patterns, a wide variety of identities is revealed. All have impact upon the process of literacy acquisition.

In this chapter I explore findings concerning constructions of student identity, which can be broadly grouped into two areas. First I will look at educational discourses,

or what students say about who they are, what learning is and who they are as learners. It is here that I will discuss the way students claim identity as learners and as persons by exploring their allegiance to two educational discourses present in the class: cognitive and constructive.

If ended here, this dissertation research would not paint a complete picture of student identity because a second aspect of student identity is also present in the class. This second aspect relates to what students do. In this category pedagogical discourse is examined to see the ways that students participate in interactions in class during the processes of interacting in this learning environment. In this category there are also two possible discourses: the LD/skills discourse and the genre/dialogic discourse. Each discourse is significant because each provides students with different possible subject positions or identities.

Table 8: Discourse Table

Discourse	Definition	Findings
Educational Discourse	What students <u>say</u> about: ➢ Who they are ➢ What learning is ➢ Who they are as learners	➢ Cognitive Educational Discourse ➢ Constructive Educational Discourse
Pedagogical Discourse	What students <u>do</u>: ➢ Ways they participate in interactions ➢ Processes and interactions in learning ➢ Subject Positions	➢ LD/skills Pedagogical Discourse ➢ Genre/Dialogic Pedagogical Discourse

For example, at various times teacher and students in the class take up various subject positions depending upon the discourse that they are drawing from and depending upon the intent of the message. Students alternatively take up participant, evaluator, facilitator, or receiver of information subject positions. This second category of data adds to the first category by showing how students could be speaking in the cognitive educational discourse by explaining themselves in a skill/information processing way yet positioning themselves with subject positions that are only available in a pedagogical discourse that is genre/dialogic. This ability to split discourse and to participate on two levels is significant for me. It demonstrates that the discourse patterns offered by the class culture allowed students to take up subject positions that would otherwise not be available to them. This transition in discourse afforded the users to be able to participate in production of knowledge while still employing identity constructions of the cognitive educational discourse.

Table 9: Pedagogical Discourse: Subject Position Availability

Participant	LD/Skills Pedagogical Discourse	Genre/Dialogic Pedagogical Discourse
Student	➢ Receiver of Information	➢ Participant ➢ Evaluator ➢ Facilitator
Teacher	➢ Evaluator	➢ Participant ➢ Evaluator ➢ Facilitator

In this dissertation project students construct identities that are in alliance with or in opposition to the dominant class discourse. This class discourse is itself in opposition to the institutional discourse. As students negotiated through course requirements, they drew upon a series of subject positions and educational discourses that defined them as members or participants in various communities. These identities and community memberships result from their current contexts and prior learning and from previous associations. I have chosen in this research some of these possible identities and subject positions to determine the impact of genre pedagogy.

Data Analysis Terms

The following terms are used in the data analysis of this dissertation research. I sorted the data using a limited number of analysis terms. I chose these terms for their ability to reveal the impact of the pedagogy I implemented. I will first look at educational discourses.

Educational Discourses

I am defining educational discourse here to relate to student learning and construction of knowledge. Educational discourses relate to what students say, how they individually claim identity as learners and as persons, and what they say about who they are and what learning is. In examining data with this lens, I seek to see how the students construct what learning is to them. I am seeing if learning and literacy are focused upon

metacognitive goals of information processing or production of knowledge goals of membership and identity. In this area I sort the data looking for two discourses.

Constructive. Constructive discourse indicates a belief system that follows class-supported constructive belief. This discourse system stressed constructive belief in information and doubted constructions of disability without evidence. This discourse community held suspect aspects of diagnosis and of sequenced skills pedagogy. The educational paradigm most associated to this discourse was the constructive paradigm. Evidence of participation in this group can be seen in dialog that challenges assumptions made by traditional or cognitive participants.

Cognitive. Cognitive discourse indicates a traditional student role belief system within the information-processing model. An example of this type of speech would be dialog explicitly connecting the use of skills with facility or understanding of language or language- processing. It would use as a goal the concept of metacognition. The educational paradigms most associated with this discourse are the cognitive or medical model paradigms. The student role in this discourse is to accept the information-processing conception of ability/disability and to work through traditional means to remediate literacy problems.

Pedagogical Discourses

Pedagogical discourses describe what students do in class. They relate to how a student communicates or the ways that they participate in interactions. In examining data

with this lens, I seek to see if participation is consistent with metacognition, stressing a hierarchical skills acquisition sequence, or orientated towards production of knowledge, stressing a participatory membership outcome.

This discourse pattern can be seen in student dialog containing attempts to participate by creating new patterns of knowledge. These new patterns would be consistent with production of knowledge because they represent a new and respected contribution to the discourse. The kind of language associated with this discourse consists of students making text-supported assertions both in written and verbal language that dialogically advanced the discourse by mutually constructing new knowledge.

These discourses are different from the educational discourses. It is possible, for example, for students to be speaking in the cognitive educational discourse by explaining their learning in a skills/information processing way. Yet, this same student could be drawing on the genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse by using subject positions that are only available from the genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse.

LD/Skills Pedagogical Discourse. This discourse pattern is interaction characterized by the use of receiver of information subject position for students and evaluator subject position for the teacher. Its use encourages metacognition or facility with skills as literacy.

Genre/Dialogic Pedagogical Discourse. This discourse pattern is interaction characterized by the use of participant, evaluator, and facilitator subject positions by students. For the teacher it uses participant, evaluator, and facilitator subject positions

and its use encourages production of knowledge and stresses membership and dialogic construction of meaning.

Subject Positions

Participant. Setting self as active member in discourse. The instructor or students using this subject position set themselves as active participants in the dialog. Language associated with this subject position establishes the speaker as being a member of the dialog and producer of knowledge.

Receiver of Information. Setting self as a passive receiver. Subject position possible mostly in LD/skills pedagogical discourse. This subject position is non-participatory and reflects an identity of passive information gatherer.

Evaluator. Setting self in position of judgment of others or of their responses. Subject position available mostly to teacher but also to students in the genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse. This subject position reflected a participatory identity in a mutually constructed understanding of class members dialog.

Facilitator. Setting self in position as helper in dialog. This subject position was usually available only to teacher but also available to students in genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse. This subject position relates to identities that allowed for continued dialog or actions that furthered dialogic interaction.

When examined with this lens, the development of academic literacy by LDL students is revealed to be far different than simple skills acquisition. Instead, literacy acquisition is a complex pattern of identity construction and membership. While it is true that skills acquisition still plays a part in the process of membership, these attributes are revealed to be only part of the puzzle of literacy acquisition.

One of the first and most important conclusions I can draw is that many students did indeed develop a strong identification with academic literacy. Equally true, however, is that other students seemed to draw from a number of different discourses as they proceeded through the class. It has become clear to me that the students in the class did not simply join my "club" as I had proposed it. Instead, my students were faced with a array of discourses all vying for the their attention. This was not a class of development in constructivist identities. Instead, a wide variety of identities was developed, each in competition with the dominant, class-sanctioned discourse.

The intent of the course was to facilitate the students in the development of academic literacy. There are, however, examples of students taking up subject positions within the LD/skills pedagogical discourse. The best example of this discourse pattern can be found on the exam given to the students at the end of the skills sequence. Within the context of an exam, and within this course section, students took up the discourse of LD. One question in particular allowed the students to participate in this way: "Explain how the same skill can have the receptive, processing and expressive components." In this question I was drawing upon a cognitive educational discourse, although unintentionally. Pedagogically, I was also seemingly focusing the students upon a skills orientation in their answer. Understandingly, students faced with this question were in

essence forced to adopt an LD/skills orientation in response. Examples of answers read as follows:

> When taking notes for example, you must first be receptive and listen, then you must process and take note and then you man need to express the ideas in a paper or on a test.

Another student noted:

> A skill can have the components in it by how you or another receives it, comprehends and uses the skill for understanding and then show the skill and portray it.

Evident in these passages is the discourse that I was trying to get the students to move beyond. It consists of a rote memorization of skills. Evident in these passages is an attempt to say the minimum possible to meet the demands of the question. The students are not required to synthesize information or to produce knowledge.

Another example of this LD/skills discourse can be found in the essay section in the exam. This question reads:

> In class Mr. Villemaire emphasized that test taking strategies are not as important as using the Master notebook as a "product and a process" and by using the other skills outlined in the class. Explain what was meant by that statement. How are students preparing for exams by using "study skills?" What skills are involved in this process?

This question also elicited a strong LD/skills response. One student noted that, "the master notebook shows good study skills that is the product it is." Later this student lists the skills that make up the master notebook process. Another student notes, "…a

complete set of notes in the master notebook will help the student organize his material and this is what the master notebook will do for students at exam time."

Present in all these passages is an attempt to answer questions with information that is specifically required. It is also an example of the type of literacy that is frequently used in reading and study skills classes at Piedmont. Having used this pattern frequently in the past, I took action to move to a different discourse pattern.

Evidence of this multiple identification and multiple allegiances can be seen through a case study evaluation. Students can be seen drawing upon multiple discourses and multiple subject positions as they negotiated through class discourse. In order to reveal this data, I will present case studies.

These case studies reveal the wide variety of identity possibilities that existed in this class. The first case is study Tom who in many ways represents the intended result of this class. This student, more than any other, arrived at the intended class target of academic identity. This can be seen by his use of constructive academic discourse and genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse.

David, the second case study, succeeded in gaining academic identity. His situation, however, is different from Tom because of the conclusions that he drew from his experience of dealing with the multiple discourses of PMC which resulted in a similar but different conclusion. David's employment of a "why bother" attitude if academics is a "game," became for me an uncomfortable result.

The third student, Nick, differs from either of the first case studies because of the strong cognitive identity that he held. His identity, while consistent in his class experience, was somewhat modified by the genre/dialogic subject positions that he was

able to assume. This eventuality, I believe, is a desirable outcome, but one that possibly leaves the student uncertain as to the usefulness of the class.

Finally, the last case study is Sarah. She best represents the failure of the class to have impact upon all students. Whereas the other students all to an extent reveal change and increased use of constructive-inspired subject positions, Sarah's example does not. Sarah enters and leaves the class with perhaps a greater understanding of the skills of study skills, but without a recognizable change in genre-inspired subject position use or in production of knowledge.

Much of the data concerned with identity was drawn almost exclusively at the end of the semester. At this point the focus had shifted from the development of academic literacy to a 'survey" of LD. This section includes the paradigms associated with LD, including the medical model, the cognitive model, and the social constructive model. Also included was specific instruction about Genre and its place in LD pedagogy. The general focus of the section was lecture/discussion based in its creation and it worked well as the ending experience of the class. By this point the students were well versed in academic discourse and most seemed to enjoy the dialog and pace of the section. It was by design a college-like experience to which new "skills" should be applied.

Case Study One: Tom

Educational Discourses

The final LD section of the class seemed to have a powerful effect upon Tom, who can best described as a student who associated himself closely with constructive discourse. Although many times I can be seen as leading him in discourse expectation, he nevertheless was thoroughly aligned with this discourse. Evidence of these findings can first be seen when Tom makes his initial opinion of academia known in a conference I taped at the end of April.

Teacher	1. Then you got diagnosed with ADHD?
Tom	2. Yea, caus like when I got in 6th grade my grades fell, you know, right when I got to middle school. 3. Then you started having to do home work. Stuff like that.
Teacher	4. So you got the diagnosis. 5. You buy it?
Tom	6. Um, I don't know, not really, 7. You know I've always had, I've, I've, never, I've always refused to take medication. You know? 8. Like, It's weird that you know that you talk about social constructivism. Because that totally embodies like what I always felt.
Teacher	9. So you've been there anyway.
Tom	10. Yea, it's like weird. 11. It's weird when you have a belief and then, you know, somebody identifies it in a group. 12. It's weird.
Teacher	13. Feel good? 14. It must feel like, ah, hey wait, it's not so off the wall to feel this way.
Tom	15. Well yea, it gives you a place to identify with.
Teacher	16. Ok, good, well that's one positive thing that you got from the class then that's real important too. 17. Otherwise you kinda, how did you feel in this LD environment until then? 18. You must have kinda felt like the man outside or…
Tom	19. Yea, um, like, I don' t know. 20. In high school and like, I was, I was like, I was good at getting by so I didn't really care. You know.
Teacher	21. Um hum.
Tom	22. I was like, ya, I'll do good next year, when I get to college. 23. I got, I was like, I mean I did the exact least you had to do to get by. 24. Like I'm talking like, D's, tenths of a point away from F's.

	25. You know, I never, I never failed a core class. 26. I've failed electives because I knew I didn't need them to graduate.
Teacher	27. So you never really bought in this whole system of academia (laugh)
Tom	28. No,

In this passage Tom was directed to answer specific questions concerning his diagnosis. The conversation shifted in line five when I asked him if he "buys" the diagnosis. Here, I was essentially directing the conversation to more of a constructivist perspective. I already knew, because of my experience with Tom, that he was very much in favor of this viewpoint. In line 6 Tom confirmed that he doubts the cognitive construction of his ability. Instead, in lines 20 and lines 22-26 he offered his own more constructive assessment for his literacy problems. Here he stated that his difficulties were caused by his choice not to join rather than an innate cognitive ability. He noted that he played enough of the game to pass the classes that were important, lines 23-25, but that he never really felt that this was a community that was worthy of membership. He also noted the importance that he felt in having the opportunity to study constructivism in lines 8, 11 and 15. Tom can be seen throughout this passage employing a constructive educational discourse.

Tom's rather low opinion of academia extended to his view of his own diagnosis. In the introduction of his final paper on defining his own learning, Tom related his feelings towards the field and of how he reacted to a constructivist argument.

> I am an involuntary member of the Learning Disabled community. By involuntary I mean to say that I did not lobby to join this community of people that are labeled disabled. It was bestowed upon me one spring day when I was ambushed by a pack of pencil wielding "specialist". I have always been a very intelligent person, yet my struggles in school got me diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, or ADHD. I have never been one to accept anything the establishment says as the truth,

> and I questioned from the beginning the very existence of this Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. It was not until attending a college for this special category of mentally handicapped individuals (of all places!) that I became aware of a philosophy in education that felt the same way that I do about the world of LD This philosophy is that of a group known as Social Constructivists.

In this same paper Tom then described his educational history. In this history it became clear that Tom has never really felt at home in the institution of school. The environment that he was placed in and the people that he encountered all affected how he reacted to and performed in school. These factors did not lead him to feel that school is the "enemy." He concluded his paper with:

> Like it or not, however, having a college education is almost required to remain afloat in today's society. Therefore I am plowing forward to get my degree. I will never take medication however. I will never conform to their mold through drugs. And I will never admit to any deficit or disability. I will always view school unfavorably. I am glad I am the way I am. Its like my dad has always told me, he says, "son those guys who are so good in school, who can write the detailed reports, who can crunch the numbers, they're going to be working for you one day, just like they do for me now."

With this Tom stated his opposition to the construction imposed upon him by the LD and academic communities. He was also able to affirm his own identity, with his strong use of the first person, in opposition to the institution of school. Through this he still was able to maintain, however, an understanding of the value of a "degree" but also understood this is a societal construction.

In a final interview he stated his belief that he felt now he could participate in academic communities:

Teacher	1. And you said what? (laugh) [Tom had answered this question as he entered the room before the tape machine was started. He had said that my class was the reason why school was easy now…that he had learned to "play the game."]
Tom	2. Like it, it gave me like a way to look at like, you know, how to, how to look at school, you know?
Teacher	3. Hum.
Tom	4. Just like, (pause) I don't know, 5. I always think back about, just like playing the game. 6. You know, like, like I used to look at it like the enemy, 7. but now I look at it is like, look, I can do this, and beat them at their own game, 8. you know, like I found out exactly what they want and I do it exactly how they want it, 9. and it's usually not that hard.
Teacher	10. (Laugh) ok! 11. Has it effected how you think about yourself as a, as a person… 12. in doing the game or…?
Tom	13. Yea! 14. I mean like, now that I'm making good grades I think of myself as, like, I know how to do it, 15. like I'm a good student now. You know?

In this sequence, Tom entered my office already speaking about how the class has affected his performance. As I started the tape, I asked him to repeat for the "record" what he had said (line 1). Tom responded that the class "gave him a way to look at school," (line 2). This suggests that Tom had succeeded in removing himself and his performance from his construction of himself from academia. He then stated (line 5) that his view of it is now consistent with the constructive argument that I presented in the class. He noted that participating in academia was now more of a "game." This shift was significant. It suggests that Tom's understanding of literacy had changed to see it as a community with self-enforcing rules (lines 7-8). This is, of course, vastly different from the information-processing model with its inherent deficit model. Furthermore, Tom was successful in resisting the information-processing identity. His identity is now one of a "player" who knows the rules and can play it by its rules (lines 14-15).

Pedagogical Discourses

In the area of pedagogical discourse, Tom offers a different yet similar view. Here it becomes clear that Tom participates in a constructive educational discourse and a genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse. He uses the subject positions available to him in the genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse.

Teacher	1. I think that that's the intent
Tom	2. (cutting in) I think that, I mean that…Its still a dangerous road to go down. 3. Because if you can test a newborn, then you can test it in other than that, 4. ok?
Teacher	5. Yea, if you do it pre-nataly, 6. and if you know that this kid might be dyslexic, 7. should you abort?
David	8. Right.
Tom	9. Yea
Teacher	10. Would the parent want to?
Tom	11. Abort? No, you can test the eggs, 12. like in vitro fertilization, you can test eggs and sperm, you could get the right egg. 13. That's not technically wrong. You got to choose eggs anyway
Teacher	14. Absolutely.
Tom	15. But that like, that's exactly like that movie "galicao" was was
Teacher	16. I don't want to talk about that movie. (laughter)

Participant	Line	Form	Function	Subject Position	Pedagogical Discourse	Educational Discourse
Teacher	1.	Statement	Serves to end pervious statement	Evaluator	Genre/Dialogic	
Tom	2.	Statement	Responds to discussion	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
	3.	Statement	Explanation of statement	""	""	""
	4.	Question	Inquiry of understanding		""	""
Teacher	5.	Statement	Serves to accept student statement	Facilitator	Genre/ Dialogic	Constructive
	6.	""	Serves to add to student statement	""	""	""
	7.	Question	Serves to invite student comment	""	""	""
David	8.	Statement	Serves to indicate agreement	Evaluator	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
Tom	9.	Statement	Serves to indicate agreement	Evaluator	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive

Participant	Line	Form	Function	Subject Position	Pedagogical Discourse	Educational Discourse
Teacher	10.	Question	Serves to invite student comment	Facilitator	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
Tom	11.	Statement	Serves to add to understand	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
	12.	Statement	Serves to add to statement	""	""	""
	13.	Statement	""	""	""	""
Teacher	14.	Statement	Serves to accept student statement	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
Tom	15.	Statement	Serves to connect statement to new idea	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
Teacher	16.	Statement	Serves to end dialog	Evaluator	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive

In this text sequence it is clear that Tom felt free to take up the subject positions of participant and evaluator as he did in lines 2-3 and in line 9. This subject position choice is consistent with his general use of genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse. Additionally, he was using the genre/dialogic discourse to express himself and produce knowledge in lines 2-4 and in lines 11-13. Here Tom was offering original ideas to the class as part of his participation in the dialog.

He was also successful in this practice in the following sequence:

Tom	1. I think these, like, you tell a kid he has a learning disability and he just not going to perform ever again.
Student	2. Yea
Tom	3. Because he is gonna think that he's got a deficit and its really, you know, he is not going to…you know, 4. I just think that um, if I tell little kids that if they can't do something if they are worst at something, then it's just making it worst. 5. You know?
Teacher	6. Well it must have been that for you, 7. how did it feel like to, for you when you were told?
Nick	8. That's, that's, that's how I understand what Tom is getting at. It's because I….
Tom	9. It's like if you just give them help, you know, like, you could get them there without having to label them. 10. You know? 11. like, in, it just seems like you would accomplish a lot more without…telling them that they have a deficit.

Participant	Line	Form	Function	Subject Position	Pedagogical Discourse	Educational Discourse
Tom	1.	Statement	Serves to indicate opinion	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
Student	2.	Statement	Serves to indicate agreement			
Tom	3.	Partial statement	Serves to state position	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
	4.	Statement	Serves to complete statement	""	""	""
	5.	Question	Serves to invite dialog	""	""	""
Teacher	6.	Statement	Serves to indicate understanding	Evaluator	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
	7.	Question	Serves to turn previous statement into question	Participant	""	""
Nick	8.	Partial statement	Serves to indicate agreement	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
Tom	9.	Statement	Serves to indicate opinion	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
	10.	Question	Serves to pause			
	11.	Statement	Concludes thought	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive

Again in this passage Tom was able to express himself using subject positions available to him from the genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse. This demonstrates that Tom felt quite comfortable in expressing himself in class dialog. He firmly established himself as a participant, one who was capable of producing knowledge.

Conclusion: Tom

Review of what Tom says about learning and learners reveals that he was able to draw from the constructive educational discourse in most situations. Furthermore, examination of subject positions reveals that Tom was also able to use the genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse. Tom was able to find a community that valued his perspective on

Learning Disabilities. This process of acceptance resulted in a student who now felt he knew the rules of the "game" and was now, because of this knowledge, more willing to play by them. In many ways Tom was one of the "success stories" of the class. Of all the students he most profited from the genre perspective. It gave him the empowerment necessary to stand up to the discourses he encountered and also provided him with a sense of membership in academia. In the aftermath of the class, Tom continues to do well. He was accepted into the credit program at Piedmont and has maintained high grades. He complimented the class and me when he stated that the class had had "the most impact on me so far."

Case Study Two: David

David's experience in class offers another view of the processes at work in this genre-inspired class. For David, there was not a clear result like there was with Tom. Instead, David had a conflicted or contradictory experience. Perhaps because he was so aware of the conflicting messages being sent by my class and by the institution, he began to chafe at the discordant discourses. He was a student who was aware that his study skills class had a differing message, a message which did not liberate him as I had predicted, but rather caused him to question. This questioning became a strong focus of our relationship.

Educational Discourses

David's general experience in the class was one of class leader. Possibly due to his maturity, possibly due to the natural match between the curriculum and him, David quickly grew to articulate the course goals. Frequently, my field notes indicate that David would note the importance of literacy, its connection to power and to the concept of discourse community in class discussions.

My first notes about him are that he was a "big likable person" who would often stay after class to discuss issues that arose. I believe that the fact that his age was much closer to mine also aided in his interest in the procedures of the class. Looking back at the data generated by David, it is clear that he did have a "successful" semester by Piedmont standards. While some "needy" students seem to generate many e-mails and meetings, these things did not happen with David. In my class field notes I note how David has "changed in strength" and that other students have noticed the change as well.

This dissertation has already mentioned David's experience in negotiating the class and institution discourses when the topic of institutional constructions of literacy and their impact upon students was discussed in Chapter 5. Here, this same situation must be revisited to consider the additional aspect of identity and how this literacy expectation impacted this class. Early in the semester David showed real insight into his learning and into the teaching methods I was trying to use. David developed the ability to engage in dialog about his own diagnosis, its meaning to others and its meaning to himself. He seemed no longer willing to accept what experts were saying about him and

fully felt able to participate in the discussion if it did happen. He now, by the end of the class, seemed to be stating that the "system" needs to be changed.

In this dialog taken during the last two weeks of class, David offered his assessment of the situation that LDL students face.

Teacher	1. David, comment? 2. You have been totally silent 3. I have to ask you what are your thoughts or 4. are you just tired?
David	5. Well, it is the wisdom of no escape.
Teacher	6. (laugh) what is that?
David	7. Um,….
Nick	8. This could be interesting.
David	9. It is interesting that we, there is, we are always trying to find solutions. 10. You know that they were always labeled something wrong here, 11. that solutions…
Teacher	12. Right
David	13. And schools enforce, 14. that and parents enforce that 15. and and the medical community enforces that. 16. Rather than um understanding about where, you know, actually, a, understanding that you are who you are and you wher…you are where you are.
Teacher	17. Yea
David	18. …and life and community. 19. So you gotta look at the big picture, 20. you gotta look away from academics. 21. Because academia…academics can really enforce non-normal. 22. You're not normal because you can't join the academic community. 23. So I think ah, I don't have the answer, 24. but, but I think particularly being older 25. and um discovering that there's other strengths that I have, 26. other than um academics um 27. and has been helpful and has kinda opened my eyes 28. and I think looking back looking at school, you know it is, it's traumatizing to enforce and label a child, 29. basically, and um I don't know where you can get away from it. 30. I mean it's tough, I mean it's …
Teacher	31. You gotta be in school.

As the students talked, I noticed that David was remaining mostly silent. The text sequence began with me trying to draw David into the dialog. In line 5, David responded

to my invitation with the surprising statement, "it is the wisdom of no escape." This comment speaks much about David's understanding of his predicament.

David explained this observation (lines 9-11) by indicating that this understanding about LD stems from what can be interpreted as a constructive understanding of LD. David here was commenting directly upon the deficit model (line 10) and observing its shortcomings. David concluded this introductory passage in lines 13-16 where he further indicated what he saw as the institutional enforcement of the deficit model.

Lines 20-22 emphasized his understanding of the connection between the deficit model and academia. As an older student, David returned to his belief that he had the opportunity to recognize his own strengths (lines 24-26) and see what he believed to be the negative implications of labeling (line 28).

The dialog came to an end with David commenting on the idea that students need to know what is "effective." David responded that this is also the "wisdom of no escape" as well. Here he was noting that all the attempts to find solutions are inescapable. Students with LD are truly in a dilemma.

At the end of this dialog I tried to summarize. I noted that the key was "knowing what works for each student." To this David replied, "knowing what works, that's the wisdom of no escape too." In saying this David was referring to the fact that it is very difficult for students to avoid the diagnosis that has been given to them. Either they can ignore it and deal with the consequences or deal with it squarely, and then deal with the consequences. In any event, students face the "wisdom of no escape."

This orientation in David seems not surprising given the topic of the class and the predisposition that David entered the class with. David always seemed willing to

investigate alternative explanations for his "disability." I encouraged him to continue to question his diagnosis.

David's final paper reflected some of this growth and self-understanding. He noted in his first paragraph:

> Now that I am entering academics I see my learning style going through some interesting and magnificent changes. As a so called learning disabled student I don't see myself as disabled or even different than others. Rather I see my self as unique and having a different perspective as a learner and I have something a bit different to offer my community.

With this it becomes clear that David came to see himself as being "normal." He stated later in this essay that, "I am convinced that I do not have a different brain from the others." He seemed to understanding that the community which he is joining or in which he is seeking membership has beliefs. It is up to him to accept them or to challenge them. This, I feel, is a direct product of membership in this class. It is also clear that he valued his own perspective and what it could offer a community. This observation is a far cry from the accepted deficit model.

When asked to describe his learning style on the last day of class, David responded:

> My personal learning style is of the general paradigm. I believe I learn from many different communities. I do recognize that I have not developed academic literacy as quickly as others though. I believe that the broken computer is not broken. Rather I have not been focused or interested in academics or that I have not gotten the correct tools to empower myself in academics. Also, I believe the community of academics is not necessarily normal. Where if I was in a third world country, my skill and learning would be most valued. So what is normal?

This view of David explains his difficulties in tutorial. Clearly, he was not drawing on a cognitive discourse to explain his literacy issues. Instead, he expressed a literacy pattern that was different. He saw his lack of participation in academics as caused by not having the "correct tools." This again suggests that David was drawing from a more constructivist discourse. This notion is supported by David's reference to the issue of power and of societal valuing.

Drawing upon class-supported constructivist beliefs, David saw himself as a frustrated participant. He constructed his inability to join the academic community not as a personal failure. How can he be expected to simply accept a broken construction when the issue is one of valuing one's ability over another? This realization, however, had its cost. If David rejected the broken identity, then joining the academic community seemed almost more difficult. A skills curriculum after all, offers a clear road map to success: acquire the skills and literacy is the result. Suggesting that this equation is more complicated left David with a dilemma.

David spoke to this dilemma in the next text sequence. Here he noted his wish that Piedmont could somehow combine skills and empowerment. David stated:

David	But there's that pressure to move on to academic and that pressure can be a lot, and sometimes you cannot see any other options. So that's my fault with Piedmont. A little bit, and society, you know. There can be other options. You can succeed in other areas, and knowing that, and succeeding in another area will, I think will, boost your self esteem, and, and, and boost your confidence to succeed in the academic community.

In many ways David represents what I had expected to happen to the whole class. I fully anticipated that this technique of instruction would be liberating, and David noted this himself when he stated in a conference:

David	It's empowering. It's empowering. As a as a student particularly who hasn't done that well in school is to have a course like this saying, no you can do it, and this is what they're looking for and this is how you go about the process.
Teacher	Yea, man, that, it's a funny, that you caught…. Why do you think that you have gotten that, I mean other people in the class are not quite there, going, or making that connection or maybe you just articulate it really well. But you're someone, almost from the git go, you're….
David	Maybe its because I just a little bit of an older student and I've kinda been out in the world, and I've kinda had my own, you know, I've had empowering times. Not in school but other you know….
Teacher	Other discourse communities?
David	Other discourse communities, yea. Where I've been able to have a place and have confidence so can have confidence in the academic world too. And this class is kinda enforced that.

I, however, did not take adequate account of the greater culture of this institution and how it would affect individuals in my class. In many ways, I succeeded in placing my students in a difficult situation. In the following passage from a class discussion in the final weeks of the class, David suggested that he might always be broken in the cognitive or academic world.

David	So, it's all about literacy, really is what we're talking about. It's not about, is not un-normal… normal or not normal. It's about, you know, LD people can be geniuses they can have great ideas, they can have, but they just, they, you know, somehow, they need to be able to communicate their ideas, they need to be able to, have their ideas valued in the academic world. So they need to be able to (pause) academically write and rea, read. And speak the language.

Later he noted in the same dialog:

David	But it's empowering myself, and knowing I think that's what the ah, and I think that is what Piedmont is about… is hopefully empowering the student. If the student can see that. I think the student needs to see the lines. And saying, and that is what I think I'm doing, is well, I'm not necessarily broken, because I can do these things. I can build houses really well, and I can physically put things together, and I can keep my car going. Or whatever, and these people can't do that. And that works for me and that's valued for me

	and that gets me through life. Where. But I'm also you know, I guess broken or off course in the academic world and if I want to join that world …Oh I'm losing myself.

David seemed to be saying in that area of educational discourse that he is a strong constructivist. Despite the fact that the institution was sending him messages that did not add up, and despite that fact that he could see the implications, both negative and positive, of his diagnosis, David did seem to receive a great deal out of the class. He can see how there is "no escape" from the construction of "broken" within the cognitive or academic world, and that this understanding leaves him with a difficult decision about where he should go. He was able to articulate the course goals and to participate in the class discourse.

Pedagogical Discourses

In the area of pedagogical discourse, David presented a similar picture to Tom. David was also able to participate in a constructive educational discourse and a genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse. He used the subject positions available to him in the genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse. This pattern was evident in the next text sequence taken from a class discussion.

David	1. Some of them would maybe get it if they could move through like we're moving along in this class, 2. I mean we're not touching on real the individual's… like for writing, you know, style and stuff 3. but I'm getting that anywhere, I 'm empowering myself. 4. But I'm getting the tools to go through the system in this class…
Teacher	5. Yea
David	6. And a lot of those people might be stuck on something that they don't necessarily need to be stuck on and they're missing out 7. you know what I'm saying?

	8. There are…
Teacher	9. Yea, your really touching on something which I think is really important I call it metacognition or ability to produce knowledge. 10. If you can see yourself as a member of the community and be empowered to play the game, then the skills suddenly become important and you do use them, you use them more often. 11. And I have, what I find with skill acquisition is that my classes do acquire the skills but it is not so much that I am working on them specifically but students go wow, yea, there is an empowerment issue…
David	12. Yea

Participant	Line	Form	Function	Subject Position	Pedagogical Discourse	Educational Discourse
David	1.	Statement	Serves to add to dialog direction	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
	2.	Statement	Relates class topic to outside formats	""	""	""
	3.	Statement	Serves to follow-up on previous statement	""	""	""
	4.	Statement	Concludes statement	""	""	Cognitive
Teacher	5.	Statement	Serves to accept statement	Evaluator	Genre/Dialogic	
David	6.	Statement	Serves to continue dialog	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
	7.	Question	Requests feedback	""	""	""
	8.	Partial Statement				
Teacher	9.	Statement	Serves to accept place student comment in context	Evaluator	Genre/Dialogic	Cognitive
	10.	""	Serves to add to student comment	Facilitator	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
	11.	""	Serves to steer dialog to constructive area	""	""	""
David	12.	Agreement	Serves to indicate that student understands			

In this passage David seems to indicate through subject positions that he was a participant in the class culture. This seems clear in lines 1-4 where he employs the participant subject position and again in lines 6-7. My attempt to combine the two educational discourses (line 9) seems to go unnoticed by the class.

This next passage continues to demonstrate David's orientation through subject position. This section of text was taken in the last weeks of the class as the students discussed their last paper. This next sequence is interesting because of the shift in educational discourse that David used even while employing a genre/dialogic subject position.

David	1. I think that that is the problem. 2. I think as a dyslexic, you know, students, and population, 3. we don't really value one another 4. we don't really see the benefit. 5. And we don't trust, you know, we trust the people who are liter…have the literacy, have the power. 6. But what we're getting out of this is empowering ourselves, you know, and in, 7. and in, listening to each other and you know, you know, seeing each other's perspective, and
Student	8. Yup.
David	9. And taking control of your learning styles, 10. so I think that this is it right here. 11. You know?
Teacher	12. Absolutely

Participant	Line	Form	Function	Subject Position	Pedagogical Discourse	Educational Discourse
David	1.	Statement	Serves to introduce topic	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
	2.	""	Statement of position	Participant	""	Cognitive
	3.	""	""	""		Constructive
	4.	""	""	""	""	""
	5.	""	""	""	""	""
	6.	""	""	""	""	""
	7.	""	""	""	""	""
Student	8.	Statement	Agreement			
David	9.	Statement	Serves to continue statement	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Cognitive
	10.	Statement	Serves to close statement			
	11.	Question	Invitation to dialog			
Teacher	12.	Statement	Agreement`	Evaluator	Genre/Dialogic	

In this passage David was able to combine the discourses that he was encountering. This was particularly true in lines 2 and 9 where he began to use the

cognitive discourse while still using the subject position of the genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse. His use of the concept of dyslexic and learning styles confirms his use of the cognitive educational discourse. This mixing of cognitive educational discourse and genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse was not common in David. It was almost unheard of from Tom. David was a student who usually used the constructive educational discourse with the genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse. The next case study, however, is an example of how the pattern of mixing discourses can dominate.

Conclusion: David

David, while still valuing the genre experience, came to a different conclusion from Tom. Where Tom felt empowered to play the game, David felt unsure whether he wanted to play. David's constructive participant role is tempered with doubt. If it was just a game, then why bother?

This questioning ultimately resulted in a favorable situation for David, and the resolution came about in the next semester. He transferred out of Piedmont and embarked upon an academic program in a college that described itself as being "non-mainstream." In a final interview conducted by phone, David felt that "things were going pretty well" in his new institution. He felt that he perhaps had finally found a place that was "right" for him.

Case Study Three: Nick

Both Tom and David drew on constructivist principles with differing results. Nick, however, seemed to offer a different possibility for this study. Whereas Tom and David both accepted the constructivist principles supported by the class, Nick seemed to be uncomfortable with them. In fact, throughout the class Nick maintained his opposition to constructivist ideas. What is interesting for this study, however, is that Nick can be seen as participating in his cognitive perspective even as he uses the dominant pedagogical class discourse in dialog in large parts of class discussions. This pedagogical discourse is genre/dialogic. While all students were able to draw from multiple discourses, the experience of Nick offers the greatest evidence of how complex this negotiation could become.

Educational Discourses

Nick's use of educational discourse and construction of identity can be seen in the following selection. In this dialog, Nick can be seen to both accept the intent of the genre approach, while still maintaining his cognitive identity. This discussion was part of a class dialog concerning Ebonics. I was using this subject to suggest to the class that literacy was not "normal" and that there were differing literacies available in society.

Tom	1. Like I saw a study where they took young kids from black communities where they talk like that, you know, 2. and they really understood stuff better, 3. like they asked them what it means to get something from behind the counter. 4. Some of them didn't know what that meant. 5. Then they said in back of the counter.

	6. You know, like they knew....
Teacher	7. Ok think about testing and think about teachers who may be members of the academic or dominate culture grading people saying, "he doesn't even know what's behind the couch. 8. I mean, how can I give this guy an "A" 9. You can use that sort of metaphor for them not understanding... 10. The bottom line is English changes over time and what these researchers ague and really effectively argue is that who ever controls the dominate discourse really is up on top in society 11. and they get to stay that way by forcing other people in. 12. That is one of the stronger arguments there.
Nick	13. I'm Confused
Teacher	14. Go for it
Nick	15. Maybe my thought is just evil and so computer... 16. I don't have a good viewpoint of it
Teacher	17. No, go for it
Nick	18. But, let me finish every one,
Teacher	19. Before they jump on you? (laugh)
Nick	20. They cut me off and jump on me before I can finish. 21. I probably definitely sound evil. 22. But to me it sounds like, more like, 23. Allowing, I don't want to say ghetto jive, but like improper syntax and use of like morphemes and certain words and lesser pragmatics, coming into our language... 24. and we are allowing it to be used. 25. So for me its like if I were taking Spanish in High School, and the teacher goes, "it doesn't matter what verbs you use if you say "unm abaho" which is like short, or some other word that means smaller than or something like that, 26. it sounds like you are detracting from the actual English language 27. and you are allowing it to happen. 28. I mean, do you hear what I am saying? 29. Do people understand?
Student	30. The whole argument for Ebonics that it is not a lesser form...it is a different form.
Teacher	31. That's it. 32. I, the point ....the word that you use is proper, the proper use of English, 33. now wait a minute, where does that come from?
David	34. It comes from rich ivy league white males from Harvard, Dartmouth, and ha. 35. It comes from these guys that have the power, you know?
Teacher	36. It not the syntax rules right?

This text sequence begins with an observation by Tom about Ebonics. Tom has seen a "study" in which people do better on standardized tests when the tests are written in the dominant discourse of that group. This observation was offered as a follow-up to a discussion I began which emphasized the importance of understanding academic literacy as a discourse (lines 1-6).

Tom began the discussion sequence by stating his understanding of Ebonics and relating it to an acceptable form of literacy. This opinion of literacy as a construction was consistent with the dominant class discourse of constructive understanding of literacy as supported by the instructor. Tom was in essence supporting the dominant class discourse in this passage. He was also suggesting a constructive understanding of literacy in general.

I supported this contribution by relating the topic back to literacy acquisition (lines 7-12). In this sequence I attempted to re-emphasize the constructive argument, this time using the student-generated example to supply emphasis. This introductory sequence ended with Nick indicating that he was confused.

Nick entered this discussion with a cautious note (lines 15 and 16) suggesting that he was already well aware of the accepted class discourse in literacy. He cautiously stated that his "thought is evil and so computer," revealing his understanding of the instructor's developing assessment of the information-processing model and its relationship to literacy processing. He even went as far as to specifically request from the class the opportunity to finish (line 18 and 20). In lines 23-26 Nick began to lay out his objection to the use of Ebonics. Interestingly, he chose a strongly cognitive argument to contain his objections, based upon the idea that there is a "proper" English. His thinking drew from a constructivist discourse. He even used the terms of "we" and "our." This is suggesting a constructive, membership orientation to his argument. He maintained in the dialog, however, that language is codified, and not subject to membership interpretation. This belief system was strongly supported by the pedagogical practices of Piedmont and

of many cognitive literacy-as-skills approaches. He confirmed this in line 26 where he noted, "sounds to me like you are detracting from the actual English language."

Class members replied to this statement (line 30) by using a fairly constructive statement indicating that Ebonics is "not a lesser form," but a "different form." The teacher immediately stepped in at this point, (lines 31-33) and confirmed the accepted constructive understanding of literacy. While Nick was aware of the intended message of constructivist implications of literacy, he nevertheless found it difficult to totally reconcile this with his prior learning.

Clearly then, increased identification with the desired discourse was not the only outcome. At times student identity was in opposition to course-preferred identities. Nick's final paper was a reflection of the multiple identities this class confronted him with. Despite his abilities to participate in the literacy of academy, and despite my efforts to confront him with constructivist views, Nick steadfastly maintained his identity as he always had. His progress in the class seemed not to be impeded by his cognitive identity. In Nick's first paragraph he stated:

> Throughout the history of my life I have approached Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and my learning style from different perspectives. ADD has had a large effect on my life by affecting my learning style. Of the different approaches I have taken to address ADD and my learning style, the medical and cognitive approaches have usually been the ones I have followed.

Nick later observed:

> I believe there is a normal rate to what a person should be able to learn, how fast, and how well, in other words there is an average range of

> achievement. I sometimes fall below the level of average achievement although tests show I have the potential. I see my LD as a problem of potential versus achievement.

After discussing the necessity of medication to help him learn, Nick concluded his essay with:

> To help me learn best I need direct instruction. I benefit from the focus direct instruction gives me. Direct instruction allows the teacher to take and figure out the area I need to work on and teacher to it specifically. Feedback is also extremely necessary to me so I know how I am progressing and what areas still need work. I am also concrete Random learner and often need an instructor who is the same. If I receive these things I learn far better.

Clear from these passages is the understanding Nick has of what it means to be literate. He still feels that possession of facts is necessary for him. He also has constructed himself and the process of learning in highly cognitive ways, but this construction has not impacted how he has done in class. Indeed, Nick seems to be able to write highly effective essays even with the understanding of his learning that he has.

It is also clear that Nick himself felt no less successful in the class. School is an endeavor that requires clear guidelines that he, as a student, tried to master. Genre is another in a series of class formats that Nick was in a position to master. This one is no different, it just presents its own spin. It would seem, in the case of Nick, that genre was effective, but did not strongly effect identity.

Teacher	1. I have a tutee that would say, I just want to go to college. 2. (laugh) you know, what I want? 3. I want to go to college, 4. That's what I'm here for.
Nick	5. And if they want to go to college then they are stressing themselves in academic literacy. 6. So therefore, they themselves have to take it and stop bitching.

	7. Get what they need and go. 8. Because take and go, 9. (in higher voice) society stresses too much in academic literacy. 10. But then sit here, while taking and focusing on academic literacy, trying to make yourself so you can go to college…to become part of it. 11. No! You're contradicting yourself, 12. You're lying to your self.
Student	13. No 14. I think you can com…. I think you can come here and still like be able to go to college.
Nick	15. Oh yea, 16. You definitely come here and do that. (discussion garbled)
Teacher	17. Wait a minute, 18. let me interrupt you guys, 19. its kinda like saying you know 20. I deny that there's water in the swimming pool so, you know, 21. You gotta accept that that that's where that's the nature of contemporary…. 22. Our society values that, 23. I am going to be alive in society, 24. I could just say no, 25. I 'm going to be a rock star. 26. But the reality is that most of us have to work for a living, 27. so we have to fit in somehow, 28. so dammit, I better get a degree at Piedmont College.
Nick	29. Dooo, er, ah. Yea, you have to get something. …rob armored cars.
Teacher	30. There's that, of course.

Here Nick once more asserted a cognitive orientation. Here, he noted that he felt that there is a contradiction (line 11) in the constructivist argument. He was suggesting here that the process of attending school is in itself an investment in the system. Here was what seems to be a strong point of struggle for Nick whose participation in academia was based upon an LD identity. If you are attending school, you are admitting that there are areas that you need to "work on." The other class member seeks to clarify the point Nick was making by noting that he feels that it is still possible to come to Piedmont and "go to college" (line 14). For Nick, school was a place to remediate deficits.

Pedagogical Discourses

When looking at pedagogical discourse, Nick offered interesting results. An evaluation of the previous data reveals that Nick frequently used the cognitive educational discourse. He consistently operated from this perspective when explaining himself. Subject positions, however, used in this dialog frequently came from a genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse. This suggests that Nick, despite his allegiance to cognitive approaches, was nonetheless able to borrow from a more constructivist discourse using subject positions that otherwise would not be available to him. There are many examples of this. In this passage, Nick was discussing in class the reasons for attending college.

Teacher	1. That's key for them. [Sound of me writing on board] that's key for them. 2. Language is the possession of the discourse community that values it. 3. What is valued contemporarily in our society?
Students	4. Language; Literacy; academic literacy. (spoken in groups)
Teacher	5. Yea, (pause)
Student	6. And that's the….
Nick	7. That's the good maze of information people. (garbled)
Teacher	8. Well think of it as the discourse of power (pause-laugh) in our society. 9. Ok, so people want to go to college, 10. why are you here? 11. To get a college education.
Nick	12. To get more information of learning to convey it better, 13. the better, the better you are at conveying information, the more information you have, supposedly the better person you are. 14. (pause and a bit cautious) Better and more powerful.
Teacher	15. Ok, sometimes when you, when you go into a dialog about this and start to sort of ferreting out, 16. wait a minute, 17. what do people get when they go to college? 18. you sometimes end up with a, like a…. To get more money, to be more powerful, to be a winner in our society 19. because the losers are the ones, who… 20. and I don't know if I'm pushing, I'm nudging too far in that direction, 21. but (pause) 22. would you agree with that? Or, how do you feel?
Nick	23. People like the blinking red light. 24. They like to be the ones who make it go on and off. 25. They like to hear themselves talk,

	26. so therefore they like to have more information, to be able to convey it across to people in the most sophisticated manner.
Teacher	27. Ok

Participant	Line	Form	Function	Subject Position	Pedagogical Discourse	Educational Discourse
Teacher	1.	Statement	Serves to indicate importance of point made	Evaluator	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
	2.	Statement	Conclusion of point	""	Genre/Dialogic	""
	3.	Question	Serves to invite student commentary	Facilitator	""	""
Students	4.	Response	Serves to respond to teacher prompt	Receiver of information	LD/Skills	Constructive
Teacher	5.	Response	Serves to accept student answers	Evaluator	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
Student	6.	Partial statement	Attempt to take floor			
Nick	7.	Statement	Serves to indicate concern	Evaluator	Genre/Dialogic	Cognitive
Teacher	8.	Statement	Attempt to respond to student concern	Facilitator	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
	9.	Statement	Start of question/answer sequence	Facilitator	Genre/Dialogic	
	10.	Question	Question to be self-answered	""		
	11.	Answer	Answer to self-question	Evaluator		Constructive
Nick	12.	Answer	Student also answers question	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Cognitive
	13.	Answer	Continuation of answer sequence	""	""	""
	14.	Answer	""	""	""	Constructive
Teacher	15.	Partial statement		Facilitator	Genre/Dialogic	
	16.	Reorientation				
	17.	Question	Serves direct discussion	Facilitator	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
	18.	Answer	Answer of own question	""	""	""
	19.	Partial statement	Serves to allow for dissent	Participant	""	""
	20.	Question/ Statement	Serves to relate teacher allowance for alternative constructions	""	""	""
	21.	Partial statement				
	22.	Question	Attempt to prompt students for participation	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
Nick	23.	Answer	Serves to relate to tape recorder and how it indicated sound pick-up	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Cognitive
	24.	""	""	""	""	""
	25.	""	""	""	""	""

Participant	Line	Form	Function	Subject Position	Pedagogical Discourse	Educational Discourse
	26.	Statement	Serves to conclude statement	""	""	Constructive
Teacher	27.	Statement	Serves to accept student answer	Facilitator	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive

This text sequence is interesting for several reasons. First, it is an example of Nick being engaged in dialog using subject positions from the genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse while still maintaining his cognitive perspective. This is true in the sequences starting on line 12 – 14 and again in lines 23 –27. In the sequence starting on line 12, Nick commented that information is obtaining more information and that this makes you a "better person." This argument was consistent with his views throughout the class. Also, in lines 23-27 Nick emphasized through genre/dialogic subject positions his world view of what constitutes a literate identity. For him, to have an identity of a "literate" person, he would have to possess information that he could then use. In his last statement, line 27, he seemed to return to a more constructive posture suggesting that "conveying it in the most sophisticated manner" would be a goal. This goal, orientated around how a community would receive it, suggests the impact of the accepted constructive course discourse.

At the same time Nick frequently took a very genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse orientation. This can be seen in the next two text sequences taken from the same class transcript.

Nick	1) I think what [student] is wondering is like everyone can have an LD in somebody's eyes. 2) I mean and that is what you are trying to get at is what is the definition of an L.D? 3) Because is there really an L.D? 4) I mean, LD is based upon society norms. 5) And once again, what's normal?

Nick was very aware of the constructive preference in the class. Consider again this passage concerning Ebonics. Here Nick was able to articulate this when he attempts to speak to the class. He had rather strong opinions on the subject, but felt that he should somehow follow class norms.

Nick	6) I'm Confused
Teacher	7) Go for it
Nick	8) Maybe my thought is just evil and so computer… 9) I don't have a good viewpoint of it
Teacher	10) No, go for it
Nick	11) But, let me finish every one,
Teacher	12) Before they jump on you? (laugh)
Nick	13) They cut me off and jump on me before I can finish. 14) I probably definitely sound evil. 15) But to me it sounds like, more like, 16) Allowing, I don't want to say ghetto jive, but like improper syntax and use of like morphemes and certain words and lesser pragmatics, coming into our language… 17) and we are allowing it to be used. 18) So for me its like if I were taking Spanish in High School, and the teacher goes, "it doesn't matter what verbs you use if you say "unm abaho" which is like short, or some other word that means smaller than or something like that, 19) it sounds like you are detracting from the actual English language 20) and you are allowing it to happen. 21) I mean, do you hear what I am saying? 22) Do people understand?
Student	23) The whole argument for ebonics that it is not a lesser form…it is a different form.

Participant	**Line**	**Form**	**Function**	**Subject Position**	**Pedagogical Discourse**	**Educational Discourse**
Nick	1.	Question	Serves to focus discussion	Facilitator	Genre/Dialogic	
	2.	Question	Serves to indicate specifics of question line	""	""	Constructive
	3.	""	""	""	""	""
	4.	Statement	Serves to answer question	""	""	Constructive
	5.	""	""	""	""	""
Nick	6.	Statement	Serves to introduce subject	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	
Teacher	7.	Response	Serves to grant floor to student	Facilitator	Genre/Dialogic	
Nick	8.	Statement	Serves to start dialog	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Cognitive

Participant	Line	Form	Function	Subject Position	Pedagogical Discourse	Educational Discourse
	9.	Partial Statement	Serves to appeal to class	""	""	
Teacher	10.	Statement	Serves to grant floor to student	Facilitator	Genre/Dialogic	
Nick	11.	Statement	Appeal to be heard	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	
Teacher	12.	Question	Serves to indicate understanding of student position	Facilitator	Genre/Dialogic	
Nick	13.	Statement	Serves to position speaker to retain floor	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	
	14.	""	Serves to repeat position	""	""	Cognitive
	15.	Partial statement	Serves to introduce opinion			
	16.	Statement	Presentation of facts supporting opinion	Evaluator	Genre/Dialogic	Cognitive
	17.	""	Provides emphasis for position	""	""	""
	18.	""	Provides example to support position	""	""	""
	19.	""	Conclusion to position	""	""	""
	20.	""	Provides emphasis for position	""	""	""
	21.	Question	Attempt to appeal to class	Facilitator	""	""
	22.	""	""	""	""	""
Student	23.	Statement	Student provides dominate class discourse	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive

In this text sequence Nick drew from his cognitive educational discourse while engaging in an appeal to the class. He attempted to disarm his argument somewhat in lines10-11 by saying that it would be "computer" and "evil" to feel this way. This appeal was then followed by his argument in lines 18-21. Here, still dialogically arguing his position, he revealed his cognitive position. The sequence ended with a class member stating the more accepted constructive orientation of Ebonics.

Conclusion: Nick

Nick apparently came to a conclusion about school and schooling. Despite the emphasis of the class and despite the weight of the supported constructivist discourse, Nick remained true to his beliefs. I do not think that the class was a failure for him. He still noted at the end of the class that he truly valued the discussion of the class and that he did not feel pushed into any one ideological camp. Even though Nick resisted the approach, he nevertheless was able to participate in the class culture still using his prior knowledge.

Case Study Four: Sarah

Sarah presents a final category of identity construction in the class. Whereas all other members of the class adopted or participated in constructive or genre/dialogic discourse, Sarah did not. Reviewing my field notes reveals that there were many times in the semester where I felt frustrated with the "progress" Sarah was making.

Early in my field notes I noted that Sarah was not participating in class, which concerned me for a number of reasons. As a skills instructor it was my job to see that Sarah participated. If I let her slip through the cracks, I simply was not doing my institutional job. In addition to this institutional belief I also felt concerned that I was failing to communicate the importance of the class to her. At the time I was teaching the class, I deeply felt that this new genre approach would help. If she was not engaged, I reasoned, she must be missing the whole point of a genre approach. My field notes

indicate periods of frustration with this and with her performance. Through meetings and increased class attention, I hoped to change things.

This concern did not result in a miraculous turnaround for Sarah. As a researcher looking back over class transcripts, I was disappointed in the limited impact that she had in the class dialog. This, however, is not to suggest that Sarah was a totally passive member of the class. One interesting fact about Sarah was that she was able to take complete and perfect notes. Her notebook reflected almost a history of the class, complete with accurate pictures of the sketches I drew on the board. This suggests to me that Sarah was well aware of what was going on in class. She just seemed to be drawing different conclusions from those of the other students.

Educational Discourses

The reason for Sarah's performance in class seem to be related to how Sarah continued to construct literacy in terms of skills, and this in turn seems to have impacted upon how she performed in classes. In a conference taken in April she noted:

Sarah	I guess I do all right. My reading's gotten better. In like, my understanding of how to like um, you know, basically take something and be able to highlight it and margin note it and whatever….
Me	Yea, good.

Here Sarah revealed her continued understanding of reading in terms of skills and her belief that she was doing better in this task. This cognitive pattern was no different from Nick or other members of class. What was different for Sarah, however, was that she did not produce the dialog the other students did. This absence of dialog had impact.

Looking at the times that she spoke in relation to other class members reveals that Sarah was by far the speaker with the least amount of time commanding the floor. I noted this problem in a conference in April. I tried to encourage her in this meeting by reading a note I had composed to her advisor where I said that "While she is by no means vocal in class," she was "improving." To this she responded:

Sarah	[Laughs] I just like, I like, I don't know. A button, um [garbled]. I guess so far, I've been like, 'cause I like hold in everything that I want to say, I don't know, like I've always been that way. And then like, I don't know it just comes to a point where finally I say something.

This pattern of participation did not dramatically improve, however. In our last interview I told her of my surprise in finding so little of her in my transcripts. To this she responded:

Sarah	Right.... I had difficulty with getting involved with the class. You know, but when I do, like, you know, the first times I have ever spoken out in class was whenever I took your class.

Sarah was truly a student who was used to patiently trying to take in the skills of a study skills class. Her class notes were complete and demonstrated her determination to get the information as presented. This passive skills orientation, however, did not incorporate her into the demands of a highly participatory class. I believe that this resulted in her not totally comprehending what the class was intended to accomplish.

In Sarah's final paper she reflected the identity that prompted her to view literacy as skills. She stated:

For the past 20 years I have been through a lot because of the type of Learning disability ADD and ADHD. But, in type I have learned that I might be showing signs of dyslexia. I was first told that I had learning disabilities when I was just a little over 9 or so. Before I found this out I had shown signs of being constantly distracted, being unable to sit for along period of time, and also I just was not able to perform in classes like my fellow students. I feel that the hardest thing I had to deal with is not being able to take part in some class activities because of misunderstanding or miscommunication from teacher to student. That still is a problem that I have yet since being on the drug Ritalin I have found that it has helped me with my tension span and my understanding in class. I remember growing up not being able to do what the other kids in my class were doing. One thing what I will always remember is how my mother did not want to believe I had learning disabilities. With having concern for me in that area she would do my work to help me succeed and in her mind, help me feel better about myself. But, all that she did for me ended up screwing up learning anything in school, one thing that I did learn in school was that I was a good writer when it came to writing about things I knew about or was able to relate to. I never had any belief in myself through out school because I was different. I ended up not graduating from high school but found a school that would accept me anyways. But since then I have gone back to high school and received my diploma on my own since I was able to learn in a college slash all learning disabled environment.

Sarah's comment, "I never had any belief in myself throughout school because I was different" confirms her identity. Her additional comment, "since I was able to learn in a college slash all learning disabled environment" reveals the depth of gratitude she has for Piedmont in providing for her an academic situation in which she could succeed.

I believe the best example of how Sarah has constructed the impact of a genre inspired pedagogy can be found in the essay she wrote for the final exam. In this essay question, she was asked to describe her own personal learning style and to relate if this class had impacted it. For this essay, she wrote:

> Since I have had learning disabilities, I have learned that I am a strong visual learner. Yet, although my strongest points for learning new things lacked visuals or distinctive visuals, I have been able, surprisingly, to learn

> a lot about summary writing and all different types of college writing. When learning I prefer to have hands on activities in front of me. This is because, not only am I being taught or told how to do something or another I am also getting a chance to learn it hands-on or in a form that allows me to do just as well as see or hear.

In this passage the tension between social constructive and cognitive paradigms was played out. Sarah was able to articulate her diagnosis and relate using the information-processing model the best way for her to internalize information that was presented to her. She noted, "surprisingly," that she also had learned to write "summaries and all different types of college writing," as well.

Sarah's next placement was not in the credit-granting program following the class. She was assigned additional work at the 90's level. Repeating at this level made the emphasis upon skills in her classes clearer to her. Later in December, near the end of the next semester, she noted in our final interview:

Me	How do you feel about that?
Sarah	I was pretty upset about that
Me	Yea?
Sarah	Because like, um the amount of ah I guess, academic learning that I need is at a higher level. And um when I'm put with at lower standards for like you know, with homework and stuff like that. Kinda makes me like, I guess it kinda sets me off in the level in which like, I'm like, why should I do this when I know this, and this is just a waste of my time. You know?
Me	Oh so you're not in really satisfying classes then?
Sarah	Right

She felt in this passage that this emphasis somehow was not as challenging and this in turn caused her not try. I believe that this confused Sarah. If learning is skills, then when will she feel more challenged? This construction of skills as literacy resulted in the belief that she was encountering "lower standards."

Pedagogical Discourses

In the area of pedagogical discourse Sarah offers a picture that serves to explain some of the difficulties that she encountered in the class. It was particularly difficult to find data for Sarah in this category. Perhaps because of how she constructed herself in the class, and perhaps because of how she constructed learning, there are simply few examples of her discussing issues of content in the class. Instead, instances of her participation come from places where she held the most expertise. For Sarah, her expertise was highest in the area of self-understanding and metacognition. It was in this area that she was most comfortable and able to produce knowledge. In content areas she remained silent. This understanding is reflected in the following passages. In one class discussion she noted:

Teacher	1. Comments? Do you all agree? I mean,
Sarah	2. One of the things I hate the most is like I mean about being categorized or what ever, 3. is like when they tell you like you have like many or more than one or two disorders, 4. and you're like (look of confusion)
Teacher	5. Which category do I get to be in.
Sarah	6. …there's a problem (spoken with drama)
Nick	7. Should I be sticking myself to death now or…
Sarah	8. I know, cus like, they're like, like when I was younger like my mom flipped out…just whenever she found out that I had ADD. 9. You know, it was like, (gasp) Oh just went into heart failure.
Teacher	10. You're ADD positive now, …yea
Sarah	11. Like, like, like, I went into high school, they were like, um diagnosed me with ADD and ADHD and then I came (here), and now they are say'in, I think that you might have some dyslexia…. 12. There might be something else in there. 13. And I like, (pause) thanks, a lot!
Teacher	14. Well, we know that you don't do good at school.

	15. You know that's about all we can say. 16. People do want to be precise with their diagnosis. 17. And that's part of the LD paradigm too, they want to be (garbled) and they do want to have that clear. 18. It does feel like piling on though huh?
Sarah	19. Yea, it just makes me feel like, 20. I don't know I guess basically, um overwhelmed, in a way that, like, I don't know.

Participant	Line	Form	Function	Subject Position	Pedagogical Discourse	Educational Discourse
Teacher	1.	Question	Serves to invite student participation	Facilitator	Genre/Dialogic	
Sarah	2.	Answer	Student answers question	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Cognitive
	3.	""	Serves to provide supportive information	""	""	""
	4.	Partial statement	Serves as conclusion to statement	""	""	""
Teacher	5.	Statement	Serves to verbalize student gesture for verification	Facilitator	Genre/Dialogic	
Sarah	6.	Partial statement	Serves to verify teacher statement	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Cognitive
Nick	7.	Partial Statement	Serves to support Sarah	Facilitator	Genre/Dialogic	
Sarah	8.	Statement	Serves to continue thread	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Cognitive
	9.	""	""	""	""	""
Teacher	10.	Statement	Joke serves to accept student dialog	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
Sarah	11.	Statement	Serves to continue dialog	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Cognitive
	12.	""	""	""	""	""
	13.	""	Conclusion	""	""	
Teacher	14.	Statement	Serves to evaluate student response	Evaluator	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
	15.	""	""	""	""	""
	16.	""	""	""	""	""
	17.	""	""	""	""	""
	18.	Question	Serves to encourage student dialog	Facilitator	""	""
Sarah	19.	Partial statement	Serves to initiate response	Participant		
	20.	Statement	Concludes statement	""	Genre/Dialogic	Cognitive

Like Nick, Sarah was able to assume subject positions that otherwise would not have been available to her. She used them as she participated in the classroom discourse

even though she retained her cognitive educational discourse (lines 2-4). Also clear in this passage was the depth of the cognitive identity and the power this had for her. In line 3 she noted how she had more than one disability and how this has been difficult for her to deal with. Alternative constructive understandings of the diagnosis seem not to have had much of an impact. There are other examples of this " broken identity."

One last example of Sarah's identity taken in class augments this assertion about Sarah's identity in class. She noted:

Mike	1. No doubt. I mean especially, if you had bad grades, 2. it's like if you don't do well in school, I think anybody would describe themselves as LD.
Teacher	3. Is, is possible to be dumb in 1999?
Sarah	4. Yes! (laugh)Oh just checking.

Participant	Line	Form	Function	Subject Position	Pedagogical Discourse	Educational Discourse
Mike	1.	Statement	Serves to continue previous statement	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
	2.	""	""	""	""	""
Teacher	3.	Question	Serves to expand upon student statement	Facilitator	Genre/Dialogic	Constructive
Sarah	4.	Statement	Serves to answer	Participant	Genre/Dialogic	Cognitive

In this passage Sarah was prompted to discuss if she felt that it was possible to be merely dumb, and she responded with a "yes." Perhaps realizing the possible reception of the message she quickly retreated with a joke. My notes indicated that I felt then, and I feel now, that this statement held a great deal of truth.

Conclusion: Sarah

Sarah presents a final category of student identity. On some levels Sarah resembles Nick. Sarah has been able to employ subject positions available to her only in the genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse, while still drawing from a predominately cognitive educational discourse identity. What separates her from Nick seems to be the deep and lasting impact her multiple diagnoses held for her. This identity was not a threat as it was for David, and was not a challenge as it was for Nick. Instead, it seemed to exist as a world view. Within this context Sarah's performance suggests a form of procedural display. Her notes in the class were of high quality, her study skills were all available. This preparation, however, did not prepare her for a participatory culture that demanded that she fully engage with the content. As a result her diagnosis and this class's way of discussing it became just another uncomfortable factor in just another class. Her frequent employment of the subject position of receiver of information resulted in her being silent until an area of expertise arose that she felt she could participate in. In Sarah's case it was the area of educational discourse surrounding her own information processing.

Sarah's experience in the class in many ways leaves more questions than answers. One obvious question is the question of gender. Upon my transcription of the dialogs in the class, it became clear that Sarah simply did not have the volume of discourse that the other students enjoyed. This discovery was a bit disconcerting for me. I had really not noticed the disparity of volume as I conducted the class. Fortunately for this research project I had the opportunity to ask her about this in our final interview. I asked her why

she felt that she did not participate. In responding she emphasized that she did indeed participate and that even though it was sporadic, she still considered it to be an improvement over previous performance. I directly asked if gender had anything to do with her participation. I asked, "was it difficult because of gender, you know, you were the only woman in there." She responded, "yea, that too…." She went on to say the following however:

> But it was also like, ah you know, people like…. I'm a very funny person you know. I always I have people laughing… whatever. But I do have a very, a really serious part of me. Like when I'm in class, that is a very important thing for me, you know? Cause like I'm like a constant learner, my mind constantly wonders. You know and like I will go to a party, I will go somewhere you know and say somebody uses a word I don't know, I'll ask them what that word means, and I carry a piece of paper and I'll write it down and I'll put it inside my wallet and you know. …I felt like, people just expected me to be like, you know, late. For me to expect…for me to be…wanting to say something stupid. Or. You know, like, I don't know.

I suspect that the class offered Sarah an additional challenge that was not directly discussed. This hidden challenge perhaps was an expectation that Sarah felt that she would be compelled to play the clown or participate in a way that was not helpful for the class. I wonder if her silence was for her an endorsement and a support for the class.

Conclusion to Discourses Surrounding Literacy:

Each student in class demonstrates individually how a genre-inspired curriculum could affect them. In relation to educational discourse, the students seem fairly split between cognitive discourse and constructive discourse. Tom and David seem to draw

most frequently from the constructive discourse. Sarah and Nick almost exclusively participated in the cognitive discourse. All of the students, however, participated to some degree in the genre/dialogic pedagogical discourse.

This comparison of what students say and what they do is informative. The students who participated in this class were faced with the demands of a discourse that some were ill trained to deal with. The solution was to limit participation, or to participate in a way that was still consistent with prior learning. Some students, it can be seen, entered the class with a fairly strong academic identity. This pattern was especially true of Tom, who was able to see justification for attitudes that were already within him. Both Tom and David seem to accept as confirmation an identity and type of writing that was not far from their natural way of self-expression. The shift for them was applying this form of self-expression in a community in which they have experienced limited success. For Tom, this meant learning to play the game. For David, this meant a questioning of whether he wanted to play the game.

Nick and Sarah, on the other hand, were faced with a different problem. This problem was that of reconciling prior skills learning to what they were encountering in the class. If learning is skills, then how can they participate in this new class culture? Nick and Sarah came up with differing strategies. Nick debated and participated in this culture. He was willing to participate and debate on each topic. Perhaps given enough time, Nick would have demonstrated more use of constructive discourse. After all, the duration of this class was only 15 weeks. This is not much time compared to the lifetime of remediation that he encountered. Sarah seems to offer another solution. Her solution

was to limit participation. This limited participation, however, was still more than what she seemingly used to according to our exit interview.

The students entered my class and Piedmont College with an idea of the expectations of the requirements of the community. Students with LD are often taught that literacy is a pattern of language that is learnable with training in the proper skills. This is also what is generally believed in the institution of which they are now members. They believe that skills development and proper instruction are the keys to their mastery of this communication pattern. This pattern of belief is evident even in the earliest papers written by the students.

This reading and study skills class, however, offered an alternative perspective on the process of development of literacy. Instead of isolated skills development, this class emphasized membership, which means that skills were not emphasized in isolation in this class. Instead what was emphasized was the development of academic literacy and all of the associated issues of membership and identity. In this genre-oriented class the issues of identity and membership were brought to the forefront through the process of dialogic interaction with the texts and with the class. This class operated under the assumption that skills in isolation do not alone account for full membership. What is needed is development of a participatory attitude that empowers students to see themselves as full members.

Running somewhat counter to this process are the demands of the institution. Piedmont's construction of literacy is one that requires a different approach. It demands skill acquisition and mastery of isolated literacy patterns as the method of literacy development. With metacognition as a goal, it offers no clear solution to the problem of

student membership in academic discourse. If students must accept a deficit to remediate it and reach metacognition, then ultimate membership in a community which values production of knowledge is nearly impossible. Students must ultimately modify metacognitive approaches if full membership is achieved.

The solutions developed by class members relate to literacy and to identity. By the end of the semester, all students were better able to create a thesis, support claims and participate in evidence-supported discourse. This dialogic interaction with the text and with the class provided the necessary environment for the students to develop a participatory attitude. This attitude is one that suggests membership within this community and is necessary for the production of knowledge.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter I will provide general conclusions to my analysis and interpretation of the data gathered in this dissertation. I will organize my conclusions into several areas. First, in a general overview section, I will provide my general comments and overview of this research. Here, I hope to provide commentary concerning what my study has demonstrated and my current understanding of what the data shows for the instruction of students who are experiencing difficulty with the acquisition of literacy. Following this section I will provide a summary of the research findings, followed by findings relevant to several key concepts of this dissertation: literacy, identity, production of knowledge, and genre. Next, I will discuss implications for practitioners who work with LDL students, for Piedmont College, and for future research. Finally, I will provide my own personal conclusions. This section discusses my own understandings and beliefs derived from this research about teaching and community membership.

Overview of Study

This dissertation research has looked at the various constituencies intersecting in the educational lives of students who experience difficulty in acquiring academic literacy. In the broadest possible sense, this dissertation argues that these constituencies exert

great influence and are, in fact, colliding discourse communities related to literacy acquisition. It is clear to me that only when there is understanding of the various discourse communities involved can there be any meaningful dialog about method or procedure in literacy instruction. This dissertation was an attempt to use this paradigmatic understanding of literacy as a starting point.

I believe that a general result of this study is the presentation of evidence that there is a need to take multiple paradigms into account by research/practitioners in LD. Research/practitioners in LD must seek to determine the impact of each of the competing discourses present in literacy instruction to truly understand and implement beneficial literacy instruction. I believe my experiences at Piedmont show this. All perspectives associated with students who have difficulty with literacy acquisition could have positive contributions for students and all should be considered when curricular decisions are made. The use of a singular approach limits the practitioner in possible avenues of exploration and ultimately leaves the student with fewer options.

This connection between paradigm and curriculum reveals for me that it is critically important for teachers to reach a point of clarity in what Courtney Cazden calls the 'situated theory' that links "our own previous experience…and what we learn from others" (Cazden, 1993). I believe we as practitioners at times fail to understand the influence of paradigms and of theory upon our teaching practice.

For example, in entering my research site it was my belief that the use of genre-inspired curriculum must be implemented within a constructive belief system that encouraged a sociocultural interpretation of identity, literacy, and of membership. What became clear, however, was that present in my class were a multitude of discourses

which all influenced the culture of the classroom. I, in fact, had little control over the multiple layers of discourse found in my class. This fact of multiple literacies and multiple discourses present in my research class serves as a backdrop to the more specific findings that I will now present.

Summary of Research Findings

The two data gathering and analysis sequences of this research project can be seen as complementary to each other. My first sequence served to reveal general literacy constructions surrounding the use of genre within this culture and within this group of students. My second sequence of data gathering served to reveal identity implications of this pedagogy. A review of the entire dissertation, however, is needed in order to see the study and its parts as a whole.

In Chapter 1, after introducing the topic, I began my examination by indicating the key concepts that form this study. By its design, this study attempts to examine significant parts of Learning Disabilities, social constructivism, genre, and of the associated issues of membership and identity. These issues are disparate and difficult to grasp without a context of how they can be seen as serving to explain the same phenomena of failure to acquire literacy. I stressed, in this study, that the understanding of these concepts is only possible if an evaluation of the paradigms associated with its use is first accomplished.

I began my evaluation of these competing paradigms involved in literacy acquisition in Chapter 2, in my review of the literature. I summarized this evaluation of

the various paradigms in literacy acquisition by noting the existence of a "gap" that genre-inspired pedagogy seemed to fill. This chapter established a viable position in the literacy paradigms for genre instruction.

In Chapter 3, I provided my research questions and my methodological procedures as a means to demonstrate the tie between the structure of this dissertation study and what the review of literature revealed. Here, I presented the study's structure and the attributes of the research site arguing that this study, in its evaluation of what happens when a genre-inspired curriculum is used in this context, and the methodology used to gather the data, are inseparable. The development of this research project and of the study skills class I gathered data from are in many respects the same thing.

In Chapters 4 and 5, I presented my findings based upon my analysis of the data. In Chapter 4, I presented differing models of literacy acquisition, contrasting a skills model and a production of knowledge model. I presented this finding by first considering the evolutionary nature of the teacher's construction of literacy. Here I demonstrated that even a dedicated constructivist could not be seen as a static or stable co-constructor within the class community. My beliefs and constructions of literacy and identity were shifting and developing alongside the changes and developments that were occurring in my students. This shifting nature is of literacy acquisition was, in part, an explanation of how this research course and research study were developed and, most importantly, how the nature of the pedagogy with its use of genre methodology evolved to its final stage.

This teacher/researcher construction was then contrasted with the institution's construction of literacy. Here, I presented analysis of data revealing that the class was not taught in a vacuum and that there were serious and unforeseen institutional impacts

upon the students. An evaluation of the data revealed that the institution had profound and pervasive ways to influence the students in their construction of literacy and this construction was in opposition to the accepted class definition. I had believed at the outset of this study that I could somehow create an oasis within my class that was separate from the outside culture of PMC. My findings reveal that this was simply not the case.

Equally important in an evaluation of a genre-inspired curriculum was the students' construction of literacy. Data analysis of student literacy constructions revealed the complex nature of literacy acquisition. Revealed in this section of the chapter was the complexity of the task facing LDL students as they worked through their prior learning and their current learning. Data analysis revealed that each student came to the class with a pre-existing understanding of academic literacy. Some of the students, Tom for example, were immediately able to understand and work within a constructive discourse. Other students, such as Nick or Sarah, because of their existing constructions of academic literacy or because of institutional demands, had more difficulty in adapting to course expectations. For all the students in this research class, this genre-inspired course presented both a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge was for the students to experience academic success within this community of learners; the opportunity was for them to experience membership.

Through case studies in Chapter 5, I presented data concerning identity formation in my research class. In this chapter I argued that an evaluation of identity was necessary to fully reveal the impact of the use of a genre-inspired approach. This dissertation argued that present in this class were two educational discourses which impacted upon

identity. These discourses were drawn upon when the students were discussing who they were as individuals, as learners, and what they felt learning was. These discourses were the institutionally sanctioned cognitive educational discourse and the class sanctioned constructive discourse. Both these discourses were used in this class, with the members increasingly able to participate in a constructive discourse.

I then argued in this dissertation that these findings present only a partial picture of the identity formation in this class. To complete the picture I identified and examined class pedagogical discourses. Pedagogical discourses were defined as being what students do; the ways that they participated, and the processes and interactions used in learning. For this section, I presented findings concerning the student use of subject positions. Some of these pedagogical discourse subject positions were available only from genre-inspired discourse; others were available only from LD/skills discourse. I argued in this section that constructive approaches of literacy instruction allow for the use of subject positions that otherwise would not be available. For instance, students in this class, because of the use of constructive pedagogy, were able to use subject positions such as "participant" and "evaluator." These subject positions reflect an identity of participation, one that is capable of production of knowledge, and of participation in academic discourse. This dissertation argues that these same subject positions are simply not available in a LD/skills pedagogical discourse.

This dual comparison between educational discourse and pedagogical discourse yielded an interesting result of students who could constructively argue cognitive notions of learning. This ability to draw from constructive discourse patterns to defend cognitive

ideas was a fascinating discovery. I believe that this demonstrated that even in a class of limited duration, immediate benefits of constructive approaches could be seen.

Findings Relevant To Key Concepts Of This Study

Prominent in this research are the connections I draw between the data and the concepts of literacy, identity, production of knowledge, and genre. As a researcher approaching this topic from a constructivist perspective, I expected that there was going to be a strong connection between these concepts. Unexpected, however, was the complex nature of this connection. The reaction of the class members as they negotiated their way through the pedagogy was both perplexing and enlightening. This next section addresses these issues.

Literacy

In the area of literacy, I found that there were a multiple of sources of literacy definition (Gee, 1990) in this research project. This finding is in agreement with Gee's theoretical framework that emphasizes a constituency-based understanding of literacy. These sources of literacy included definitions enforced by my research site, my own definitions and biases towards literacy, and by the definitions supported by my informants.

It is true that the class, as a partial product of my own constructions of literacy, supported certain definitions over others. Privileged in this class was a constructive

understanding of literacy and preference was given to dialogic, argumentative forms of communication. It is also true, however, that all students did not immediately accept these constructions of literacy. Instead, some can be seen as employing and drawing upon competing discourses that vied for the attention of the participants in the class.

Furthermore, students, in their negotiation between these varying definitions, created a unique class culture within which they negotiated. My class was itself a unique and demanding discourse community that demanded certain behavior codes that rewarded some students and punished others. Clearly dominant in this class was an expository argumentative discourse style. This form of discourse was the favored way of interaction and one that altered student discourse patterns toward more constructive patterns.

Identity

In the area of identity, findings point out that students possess multiple and shifting identities that are related to the available class discourses. As Ivanic found (Ivanic, 1994) students began to adopt new identities as they participated in new discourses. An examination of the data concerning identity reveals that class members did adapt to the literacy demands that the class imposed upon them. Within this class were recognizable patterns in the educational and pedagogical discourses chosen and in the subject positions used within those discourses. This adaptation was seen in the use of constructive discourse and of the use of available genre/ dialogic subject positions, such

as participant, evaluator, or facilitator, in an attempt to satisfy the demands of class membership.

For some students, this adaptation to class expectations was not difficult. This was presumably due to the students' prior learning or disposition to constructive practice. Tom provides a good example of this type of student. For other students, such as Sarah or Nick, this class presented ideas about literacy that were almost opposite to what they favored. For these students there was not a sudden constructive change towards a new identity. Instead, they struggled and fought, and most importantly, argued. From my perspective, this demand of participation was for them a desirable end in itself.

I still view my class as a sort of antidote for the cognitive practices and procedures that had preceded me at PMC. I learned, however, the limited impact that one class in one institution can have. My students came to my class with multiple, dynamic and discursively based identities. My initial goal of turning them all into revolutionaries ready to take on the cognitive world of LD was of course hopelessly naive. My students entered my class and faced yet another complex situation with expectations that were as confusing as any that they had faced previously. Yet, within this class, the students experienced possibilities of selfhood not readily available in other more cognitively inspired classrooms.

Furthermore, examination of literacy and identity together reveals how these two seemingly unrelated concepts are tied. The literacy exhibited by class members has much to say about how they felt about themselves and about their circumstance. These self-beliefs were, in turn, reflected in their exhibited literacy. When the students were participating in a more constructive discourse they seemed to exhibit a more positive and

participatory self. Their participation provided them with opportunities for selfhood otherwise not available. This selfhood, while possibly short-lived, was what I believe to be the first true steps into participation in an academic discourse community. I suspect that continued exposure to constructive practice would yield further positive results in literacy production.

Production of Knowledge

Another prominent conclusion I draw in this research is that there is a connection between the concepts of metacognition (Lerner, 1993) and production of knowledge. This connection is that metacognition and production of knowledge appear to be contending conceptions of the end result of participation in the differing discourse communities (Bartholomae, 1986; Hymes, 1974; Swales, 1990); each is held as the ideal or as the objective of pedagogical practice. As an educator trained in the cognitive orientation of my host institution, I was well trained in the use and teaching of metacognition. My graduate studies, however, pointed me toward alternative goals for student learning that ultimately led me to this research project.

A comparison of constructive vs. skills orientations in literacy development reveals contrasts. When teachers take a literacy-as-skills approach (Poplin, 1988b), the ultimate aim is metacognitive strategies or metacognition. This is often described as "thinking about thinking" or getting the students to be aware of their thought processes. Study skills are then the means to achieve this metacognitive goal. The student's ability to understand, manipulate, and deploy their "bag of tricks" is seen as evidence of success.

The implication of this form of instruction is that students work towards metacognition as they develop skill proficiency. As they develop and automatize skills they gradually become more metacognitive. They will, after achieving metacognition, become able to participate in academically literate discourse communities because they have the perquisite skills and the metacognitive awareness to use them appropriately.

At Piedmont College this understanding contained assumptions. At PMC this model assumed that the function of language in society was the neutral conveyer of information. An additional implication of this belief system was that this process of development of metacognition itself leads to self-advocacy (Mac Gander 2000). These assumptions are the basic core beliefs of PMC and provide the underlying justification for all of its academic programs.

On the other hand, a literacy-as-practice or constructive approach (Street, 1993) does not seek metacognition as a goal; instead, the ultimate goal is membership within target discourse communities. The assertion of this dissertation study is that membership in academic discourse communities is, in part, based upon the concept of production of knowledge. Production of knowledge is substituted as the ultimate goal.

Emphasis upon production of knowledge seems to provide a viable way to empower students. This empowerment is community-specific in that it is embedded in characteristics of the target academic community. This empowerment occurs as a process of the students being able to participate using the values of the community that they are trying to join. This pattern of involvement was visible in my research class. The class culture developed participatory characteristics that valued the production of knowledge. This participatory culture, along with explicit instruction in the

characteristics of membership, was seen in the dialog transcripts, and in the written text of the students. The explicit values of academic culture, with its emphasis upon participation, production of textual argument, and its valuing of production of knowledge, was incorporated into students' daily class activity.

Genre

The use of genre instruction with this population of student seemed to offer a possible solution to the dilemma of curricular choice. Genre provided a direct way to teach the literacy practices demanded by the academy (Cope and Kalantzis, 1993). These practices need to be taught explicitly to some individuals who either have difficulty in acquiring these practices, or for people who can not easily join this form of discourse community.

Genre makes explicit the power dynamics that play a role in the membership of discourse communities (Cope and Kalantzis, 1993). These power dynamics are the various methods by which discourse communities bestow advantage or benefits upon members, and in the methods that members of discourse communities use to achieve these community sanctioned rewards. It is means by which members of communities achieve and maintain membership. Several techniques were employed in this research study to make explicit the nature of the target academic discourse. Most prominent was the use of the expository essay to foster a text evaluation and response pattern. In doing this practice, this class practiced a valued pattern of communication within the academic community. Furthermore, the explicit nature of the instruction, another quality of genre

pedagogy, fostered an awareness of the direction and goal of participation. Lastly, the role I played, as a doctoral student and as a teacher within the class, presented the students with a mentor who was also developing membership in the target discourse community. With the use of this pedagogical practice, practitioners have a method of ethically teaching the reading and writing practices of the academy, without resorting to the hegemonic teaching practice of the cognitive school.

Implications

Implications that can be drawn from this study fall into closely related categories. These categories are: implications for teacher/educators, implications related to the institution of Piedmont, and finally, implications for researchers.

This research is valuable for practitioners who wish to work with this group of learners at any level. When any teacher places him/herself in an area of literacy instruction, a multitude of discourse communities, of expectations, and of learning practices come into play. I believe the more effective practitioner will be the one who can identify these conflated and somewhat conflicting discourses.

Norman Fairclough (1992) notes the hegemonic nature of some of these institutional forces in society. He makes the point that a form of violence can be done when practitioners operate in ignorance of these forces. It is clear that practitioners as a group seek ways of instruction that are effective and informative. What this research shows is that ethical means of instruction are just as important to include in the process of making curricular choices. Because of the emphasis upon the big picture of literacy

acquisition, researchers can lay claim to this as a reasonable goal. Practitioners need to take into account these implications

The ultimate cost of pure cognitive instruction for students who experience literacy difficulty is high. It is possible that exclusive use of these techniques results in increased impediments to student success. If the ultimate goal of literacy instruction is for increased success in membership, then all possible avenues of instruction should be explored. Because of the connection between literacy and identity, and because of the ultimate goal of any literacy instruction, students who already face a literacy challenge should be given all possible chances to excel. I believe that students who experience difficulty in literacy development should be given explicit instruction in this connection between literacy and identity.

I believe that practitioners who seek metacognitive goals in literacy instruction fail to take into account the importance of the target discourse community. Students are well advised to consider the intent of many cognitive methodologies of seeking self-understanding. But, when studies exclude the implications of multiple literacies tied to discourse communities, then these practices seem fall short. Metacognitive training develops self-understanding that does not necessarily relate to successful transference to participatory membership.

The best example of this pattern in this study is Sarah. Her attempts to be a member of the target discourse community were almost thwarted by her insistence upon traditional metacognitive techniques. In the quest for more and more skills, she was not seeking membership, but instead focusing inwardly towards her own "information processing."

Much of this dialog surrounding literacy acquisition can be related to how each paradigm conceives of the nature or purpose of literacy. When the conception of literacy as the neutral conveyor of information is used, metacognition seems to be a viable direction for students to take in their literacy training. In the cognitive paradigm, possession of metacognition results in efficient information processors who should be more able to process complex data. When literacy is conceived as embedded in the standards of the discourse community, as it is for the constructive perspective, then metacognition becomes problematic. Successful processors of information need to have a social context to accurately process the information that they encounter. Instead, successful students become members of the discourse community that they are trying to join. Membership is more than awareness of information processing, it is instead based upon the specific nature of membership of the target discourse community.

While the dichotomy of metacognition and production of knowledge is useful for researchers who are teasing out differences between methodologies and seeking understanding about seemingly contradictory formulas, it does not offer much help to practitioners who are working with literacy problems in the field. It is between these two poles of constructive and cognitive methodology that most practitioners operate. It is also an area where most inconsistencies and contradictions live. While as a researcher I might suggest that practitioners operate solely in one paradigm or another, in reality all of us live in the nether world of in-between.

I believe that this research demonstrates that a genre–inspired approach offers a way for practitioners to incorporate the best of the cognitive and constructive approach. In a genre-inspired approach skills and abilities are contextualized to the process of

becoming members in an academic culture. It assumes that this membership is necessary for the empowerment of the student within that community. It assumes a critical understanding of literacy and of discourse community membership in that power relations are taken into account in the process of literacy evaluation. If practitioners recognize that discourse patterns are alternatively valued or marginalized, then teaching the context of these instances of value is necessary. This means that to enable students to participate meaningfully in target discourses, it is then important to make them aware of the power dynamics not only of the target discourse, but also of the surrounding discourses. I believe that in this class I made clear the intent of participation in academic discourse. I believe that this study offers a viable procedure in not only in how to make apparent the power relationships, but also in how to learn the discourse patterns that are key to their understanding and use.

Another implication of this research concerns ability grouping. It is evident from this study that participatory dialog in academic discourse communities encourages the members to see themselves as members. This dialogic participatory discourse is more difficult in a community that is made up of similar "profiles." This profiling is especially problematic in situations where its existence is made explicit. Piedmont is just such an explicitly labeled learning culture. Homogenous groupings reinforce the belief that students with LD are indeed different and that, because of this difference, membership in academic communities is less likely. If membership in academic discourse communities is encouraged by participation, and if participation requires an identity that views itself as a viable member, capable of acquiring membership characteristics, then ability grouping

is problematic. It emphasizes and reinforces the construction of outsider, of inability, and of failure to participate unless otherwise sanctioned.

If this dissertation's assertions concerning the importance of genre-inspired pedagogy are accepted it then becomes clear that membership in academic communities is the goal that practitioners need to work towards. Inherent in the target academic community are characteristics of discourse, including concepts such as production of knowledge, linear argumentation, and systematic support of explicit assertions. An implication of this study is that practitioners working with LDL students need to pay closer attention to this target community, or any target community, when instruction in literacy takes place.

An additional category of implications relates to the institution from which I have gathered my data. A question that can legitimately be raised is: Do students have the option to fail? This study suggests that students do have the option to fail when genre instruction is used. This "failure" is not related to a deficit within the individual, but rather because of a decision of discourse affiliation. With the requirements and responsibilities of membership of a target discourse community made explicit, then it is up to the individual to choose if they wish to belong. The choice rests with them.

Currently at Piedmont the answer to this is no. My assessment of this is that because of the depth of the acceptance of the information-processing model, if a student is not doing well, then it assumed there must be a problem with the way the student is getting information, or a problem in the way that the student is processing the information. In either case, the resulting "expressive language" problems should be eliminated with proper intervention and remediation. Never is it thought that the student

is engaged in active choice about what his/her future will be like. Instead, failure is looked at as further evidence of a Learning Disability and that this requires institutional measures to counter it.

In many ways, this is the educational product that Piedmont is offering to the academic marketplace. Many parents are relieved to hear that PMC possesses these intervention policies. After years of failure, their presence is a relief. Also, the high cost of the institution must be justified in some way. Piedmont offers itself as an institution that nearly guarantees success if the student agrees to work within the system and internalizes the implicit assumptions made about literacy. An implication of this study is that the faculty of PMC should undertake an evaluation of literacy and of the purpose of a college education considering perspectives beyond the cognitive information-processing perspective currently used.

The final category of implications is for the researcher. This study demonstrates that there are numerous layers of meaning that can be drawn from any literacy event. Evident in this study are many of the conflicting discourses that students face every day. Also evident are how student's conflicted literacies influence and are influenced by developing identities. Literacy cannot be studied in a vacuum. Within any literacy event there is layer upon layer that influences meaning. In the case of students with LD, these layers play a significant role. Parts of the research literature surrounding these students would suggest that these layers have little impact upon the acquisition of literacy process. I believe that this study demonstrates that just the opposite is true. Like any identifiable population group, LDL students come to the table with a background that influences literacy learning. Researchers need to be cognizant of the fact that LDL students are like

any other student group. The application of a "LD" does not remove them from influence of socio/cultural factors that have been increasingly taken into account for other populations.

Suggestions for Future Research

Suggestions for future research include continued exploration of the use of genre with students who are experiencing literacy difficulties. As more and more American students attempt to enter the academy, more and more of these students will be considered "remedial" or "at-risk." This population is an excellent choice to use a form of genre instruction as they sort out the meaning and possibilities of membership in the academic discourse community. A goal of students experiencing literacy difficulty is simply to remain in college. Genre instruction offers a way to directly teach to this desire.

Additional genre-inspired research could include a study that looks at before and after performance of students to determine success, or outcomes, of this approach. It would be advantageous to be able to allot a quantitative component to an evaluation of this pedagogy. With agreed upon instruments of measurement, it is conceivable that studies could be constructed to track the differing performance outcomes of various approaches. An example of possible outcome assessment is suggested by Henk, & Melnick's (1995) Reader Self-Perception Scale. In this form of research the self-perception of the reader is evaluated. This scale, if modified for writing, could be ideal to reveal changes in confidence for developmental writers. It would also be interesting to

see if classes that extend beyond 15 weeks would provide differing results from classes that are briefer in duration.

Finally, future research in the area of gender is needed. In this area the experiences of Sarah come to mind. Were the experiences of Sarah in my class explainable as a case of gender discrimination? Can her reluctance to participate as least in part be caused by a gendered atmosphere in the class? I do not have the complete answer to these questions although I did partially try to address this issue. In the pilot study of this dissertation research there were instances of female participation in the class dialog. So much participation occurred in the pilot study that I never conceived of gender as being a characteristic that I should consider for inclusion in this study. In hindsight, and despite the claim made by Sarah disputing this, I do now suspect that gender cannot fully be ignored. I believe that studies that address the relationships between gendered speech and the characteristics of academic discourse with LDL students would be fruitful.

Personal Conclusions

My own conclusions concerning this research are based upon my own understanding of teaching and my own role within communities. While I have never considered myself a naive person, an examination of my performance in the class certainly suggests that I was. I believe that even though I had an understanding of constructive implications in teaching, I nevertheless discounted their importance. In any given social encounter, individuals seem to believe that they understand what is "going

on." This fact, when viewed from a research perspective, was limiting for me. I didn't realize that my perspective on academic literacy and genre were just a perspective like any other. From the perspective of some of my students, this class was another in a series of hurdles that confront them in this dangerous world of learning. It in no way was the antidote to the information-processing model that I expected it to be.

A second personal conclusion is that as a Piedmont College instructor, I was not able to totally implement genre pedagogy. This became clear only in hindsight. This failure is not due to any structural impediment, although I feared many times that soon the "jig was up," and my academic freedoms would come to an end. This failure is mostly due to the conflicting discourses that come to any class, and how the best laid plans of any teacher can become changed by unseen or unpredictable forces.

Finally, at its core this story is about a teacher who takes responsibility for the direction of his teaching, and makes explicit the rules of a "target discourse." I hope that this study does not suggest that this is the only way to implement a genre-inspired pedagogical strategy with LDL students. As a philosophical "umbrella," genre offers many ways to continue the specific instruction in the rules of target discourses while still maintaining the positive empowering benefits of a constructivist approach.

APPENDIX A

RS 91 Introduction to Reading and Study Skills
Progress (Placement) Checklist

Name:_____ Date: _____
Course Code:_____ Instructor:_____
Advisor: _____ Semester:_____

Skills	Does not demonstrate skill	Developing Skill	Applies Skill Consistently and Independently
Organization of time and materials:			
Uses a Master Notebook as an organizational system			
Regularly brings necessary materials to class			
Uses an Assignment system for recording and tracking work completion			
Meta-cognition and self-management within an academic culture:			
Notifies instructor when absent from class			
Initiates contact with instructor about make-up work			
Demonstrates appropriate affect and behavior befitting a college-level student			
Completes 80% of assigned work on time			
Reading for Meaning (Comprehension)			
Employs active reading processes, including: prereading, highlighting/underlining, margin noting, questioning and chunking			
Recognizes writer's thesis, supporting main ideas, and key details			
Comprehends main ideas in a text of 15-20 pages in length (this should be demonstrated at least once before placement checklists are due)			
Study Skills/Writing:			
Uses Master Notebook as a study system as demonstrated by notes, summaries, sweat sheets, etc.			
Uses standard summary format that includes clearly expressed thesis and main ideas to demonstrate comprehension			
Uses a variety of strategies to prepare for and take objective, short answer and essay exams			

Comments for Placement Committee Only:

Current grade average:

Please comment on each of the following areas for each student:

Attendance:

Work Completion:

In your opinion, which RS class should this student take next semester?

RS 101? Would this student benefit from a particular section with a group tutorial? (Comprehension, Executive Functioning, Writing?)

Non Credit? Should this student continue to work on developing Comprehension (RS 92), Abstract Reasoning (RS 93), or Executive Functioning (RS 95)?

Does this student need a third semester at the Non-credit level? Explain.

Level 091: Goals

The goals for this course support the overall purpose of Reading and Study Skills classes: to teach individuals to become more effective, self aware learners and there by become more successful students.

Study Skills:

- Set up Master Notebook as a process and product with weekly check-ins from instructor
- Learn and apply time management strategies for short and long term assignments
- Take a complete set of 2 column notes from readings, discussions, and lectures
- Revise notes from lectures and write weekly summaries with instructor guidance
- Be introduced to and create an individualized system to identify and retain new vocabulary
- Initiate conferences with teachers
- Be introduced to and practice objective and essay test preparation and test taking strategies
- Apply study skills (library skills) to resources in the library

Reading:

- Apply personal active reading processes including but not limited to: prereading, highlighting, underlining, margin noting, questioning, chunking
- Learn and develop the ability to formulate implied main ideas from readings
- Evaluate the relative value of primary and secondary details
- Learn, practice, and independently identify rhetorical patterns in isolation
- Develop the ability to break readings into "chunks"
- Learn and evaluate the relationship between thesis statements and supporting main ideas

Writing:

- Learn and practice summarizing stated information from readings and lectures
- Learn and practice summarizing implied information from readings and lectures
- Learn and practice summarizing implied main ideas from a variety of readings
- Learn and practice the weekly master summary
- Learn and practice the critical reaction paper

Speaking:

- Respond to questions using course vocabulary
- Develop well-organized presentations

General Instruction:

- Establish class routines in order to help students automatize appropriate classroom behavior
- Use a variety of reading materials
- Set up check for Master Notebook
- Arrange student attendance at outside lectures to practice notetaking
- Collaborate with English teachers on models for summary writing
- Review and or introduce metacognition and present specific examples

Student Goals:

- Begin to transfer skills learned in Reading and Study Skills class to other classes
- Develop metacognitive awareness of study process

APPENDIX C

SYLLABUS

READING AND STUDY SKILLS 091

"DEVELOPING ACADEMIC LITERACY"

John Villemaire
Spring 1999
Office hours: by appointment Adm. 018
387-6830
jvillemaire@landmarkcollege.org

Goals:

The goal of this class is to develop "academic literacy." Academic Literacy is the ability to participate in an academic "community" and will help you to thrive in a college or professional environment.

Format

This course is designed to assist students in the development of high level study skills and critical thinking skills. These skills will enable students to thrive and excel in a college or professional environment. Upon completion of the course students will be better prepared to handle college level course loads, be more able to comprehend high level reading material, and be more confident and better prepared to apply an individualized critical reading approach to difficult material. Additionally, students will increase their ability to participate during discussion and will develop their analytical writing skills. Specifically, we will be evaluating and writing about information from a variety of sources. These sources may include readings, essays, position papers, media presentations, text chapters, and discussions.

Reading and Study Skills integrates both content and skills development into one class. In addition to being introduced to college level study skills, students will also be learning content information. This information, usually in the area of Education, Political Science or Sociology, will be the "content" that the skills are applied to.

This class will take a "market-place of Ideas" approach and critically examine persuasive essays in several categories. These categories revolve around contemporary issues and will serve as source essays for student response writing.

Materials

-Large Master Notebook
-dividers
-Pen or pencil
-50 sheets of paper
-Color highlighters
-Assignment book
-Dictionary
-Hole punch (optional)
-Stapler (optional)
-Reinforcements (optional)
-Thesaurus (optional)

Text

1. Skills Packet
2. Text reading - Readings which we will be studying will be mostly in the form of Handouts. I will provide them to you as we proceed through the semester.

Skills

-Classroom and discussion skills
-Time management
-Master notebook
-Organization of product, process
-Paraphrasing
-Active reading / SQ3R
-Main ideas
-Thesis (both finding them in written material and formation of your own)
-Test taking skills
-Summary paragraphs
-Reaction papers
-Analyzing skills
-Questioning skills
-Using highlighters
-Taking notes from reading and lecture
-Revising notes
-Listening, memory, perception and critical skills
-Content comprehension

Grading

At the end of the semester term grades will be averaged using the following formula:

⇒ Exam _____ =grade x 4
⇒ Quiz _____ =grade x 2
⇒ Papers _____ =grade x 2
⇒ Class participation =grade x 4

- -final exam will be worth approximately 20% of the final grade.

- -Students will have **two weeks** to make arrangements for grade improvement.

Expectations

Class participation is evaluated by how well the student is meeting class expectations:

-Have all materials ready for class
-On time to class (note school late policy)
-All work complete-an hour's worth
-Participate in discussions (learning is dialogic)

Students also will be expected to show comprehension of skills presented during the semester by being able to do the following tasks. 1. Oral reports 2. Summary papers 3. Reaction papers 4. Team projects 5. Regular tests and quizzes 6. Class participation

Attendance

Every effort should be made to make it to class. If for some reason you are going to miss please let me know **before.** When a student reaches 3 absences, they will receive a verbal warning and I will alert the student's advisor. At 5 absences I will be forced to discuss the possibility of **grade reduction** or **withdrawal** from the class. (depending upon documentation) Remember, even if you have documentation, your participation in class is vital. Your grade may be adversely impacted by absences.

APPENDIX D

Table of Articles used in RS 091

Kakutani, M. (1993, April 30). When History Is a Casualty: Holocaust Denial. *The New York Times*.
Kinsley, M. (1991). David Duke and American Decline. *Time*(November 25), 110.
Krauthammer, C. (1990). AIDS: Getting More Than Its Share? *Time*(June 25), 80.
Krauthammer, C. (1990). Can America Stand Alone? *Time*(October 22), 96.
Krauthammer, C. (1990). Reparations for Black Americans. *Time*(December 31), 18.
Krauthammer, C. (1991). Hail Columbus, Dead White Male. *Time*(May 27), 74.
Krauthammer, C. (1991). Why Arms Control Is Obsolete. *Time*(August 5), 68.
Krauthammer, C. (1991). Must America Slay All the Dragons? *Time*(March 4), 88.
Krauthammer, C. (1991). Saving Nature, But Only for Man. *Time*(June 17), 82.
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Krauthammer, C. (1994). Enough Bear Stroking. *Time*(January 31), 116.
Krauthammer, C. (1996). When John and Jim Say, "I Do". *Time*(July 222), 102.
Krauthammer, C. (1996). Elephants Run Amuck. *Time*(Marth 4), 74.
Krauthammer, C. (1997). The New Prohibitionism. *Time*(October 6), 112.
Krauthammer, C. (1997). The Great Di Turnaround. *Time*(September 22), 104.
Krauthammer, C. (1997). When Diplomacy Becomes Obscene. *Time*(August 11), 84.
Krauthammer, C. (1999). The Clinton Doctrine. *Time*(April 5), 88.
Krauthammer, C. (1999). The Worst Idea of the Decade. *Time*(February 1), 76.
Lenssen, N. (1989). Where Have The Ducks Gone? *World Watch*(Jan-Feb), 8-9.
Muravchik, J. (1991, January 24). At Last, Pax Americana. *The New York Times*.
Schlesinger, A. (1991). The Cult of Ethnicity, Good and Bad. *Time*(July 8), 21.
Trippett, F. (1989). A Few Symbol-Minded Questions. *Time*(August, 28), 72.

APPENDIX E

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

If the skill DOES NOT have a hyphen before it, please DO NOT check it off because it is a SUB-HEADING. The sub-heading WILL appear automatically on the grid if you check off any of the skills below it. This will avoid problems when the grid is printed in the spring term.

DIAGNOSTIC TUTORIAL REPORT FOR REVISED 1998

Key: error/correct word

ORAL READING

Alphabet Skills

- sequencing the alphabet orally
- recognizing basic sound-symbol relationships

Linguistic Patterns

- initial consonants
- final consonants
- short vowels
- initial consonant blends
- final consonant blends
- initial consonant digraphs
- final consonant digraphs
- silent e
- double vowel combinations
- hard and soft c and g
- vowel r
- schwa
- advanced consonant pattens
- advanced vowel patterns

Common Sight Words

- the Ernest Horn list
- from contextual reading

Basic Syllable Types

- closed syllable
- open syllable
- consonant le syllable
- silent e syllable
- double vowel syllable
- vowel r syllable

Syllabication Principles

- applying the syllabication principle VC/CV (nut/meg, rab/bit)
- applying the syllabication principle V/CV, VC/V (ho/tel, cab/in)
- applying the syllabication principle /Cle (ca/ble, can/dle)
- applying recognition of prefixes, suffixes and root words to syllabication
- applying syllabication techniques to multisyllabic words
- placing stress in multisyllabic words

Contexual Reading

- confusion of visually/auditorily similar letters
- insertion, omission of letters and syllables
- transposition of letters and syllables
- insertion, omission, or substitution of prefixes and/or suffixes
- substitution of words by initial letter or partial recognition
- substitution of words by context
- insertion, omission of words
- transposition of words
- insertion, omission, or substitution of small words
- omission of lines of text

Fluency

- enunciating more clearly
- observing punctuation when reading
- employing appropriate phrasing and intonation
- maintaining appropriate reading speed
- reducing inappropriate repetition of words and phrases

SPELLING

Common Sequences

- sequencing the alphabet in writing
- the days of the week
- the months of the year
- the seasons
- the cardinal numbers
- the ordinal numbers

Linguistic Patterns

- initial consonants
- final consonants
- short vowels
- initial consonant blends
- final consonant blends
- initial consonant digraphs
- final consonant digraphs
- silent e
- double vowel combinations
- hard and soft c and g
- vowel r
- schwa
- advanced consonant pattens
- advanced vowel patterns

Common Sight Words

- from contextual spelling
- common homophones

Syllabication

- applying the syllabication principle VC/CV (nut/meg, rab/bit)
- applying the syllabication principle V/CV, VC/V (ho/tel, cab/in)
- applying the syllabication principle /Cle (ca/ble, can/dle)
- applying recognition of prefixes, suffixes and root words
- applying advanced syllabication techniques to multisyllabic words

Principles and Rules

- f, l, s doubled
- k/ck
- ch/tch
- ge/dge
- first doubling
- final e
- y to i, and y unchanged
- two syllable doubling
- ie/ei

Memory/Discrimination

- auditory memory for all sounds and syllables in a word
- visual memory for words
- sequencing of sounds
- auditory discrimination of letters
- visual discrimination of letters

Proofreading

- writing legibly
- proofreading for spelling errors
- using spellcheck on computer

COMPREHENSION

Basic Concepts

- understanding spatial concepts and vocabulary (directionality, prepositions)
- understanding temporal concepts and vocabulary (months, days, clock time, Roman numerals)
- sequencing days of week, months of year and seasons orally
- categorizing objects and ideas

Literal Comprehension

expanding vocabulary
    - understanding and using new vocabulary
    - inferring the meaning of words from context
    - using a dictionary and thesaurus
    - recognizing prefixes, suffixes, and root words
- understanding sentence structures (continued next page)

(Literal Comprehension - continued)

understanding paragraph structures
understanding stated main ideas
- in paragraphs
- in lengthy selections
- distinguishing between main ideas and details
understanding organizational patterns
- spatial order
- temporal order
- general to specific
- order of importance
- examples
- classification
- compare and contrast
- cause and effect
- definition
- following written directions

Inferential Comprehension

understanding indirectly stated main ideas
- in paragraphs
- in lengthy selections

- making inferences
- drawing conclusions
- understanding figurative language
- understanding abstract concepts

Critical Comprehension

- relating knowledge from other sources
- recognizing gaps in background knowledge
- researching important background information on the subject
- distinguishing fact and opinion
- identifying author's purpose and audience
- identifying author's tone and bias/viewpoint
- categorizing readings in terms of author's viewpoint
- extending author's viewpoint to other situations
- evaluating the information supporting an author's viewpoint
- viewing the material from diffeent perspectives

Reading Strategies/Efficiency

- establishing a purpose for reading
- developing an individualized active reading plan
- developing metacognitive strategies for monitoring comprehension
- developing pacing strategies to increase reading rate/efficiency

STUDY SKILLS

Organization of Time

- maintaining an academic calendar
- completing short and long term assignments
- adhering to a study schedule
- using time efficiently

Organization of Materials

- maintaining a master notebook system
- keeping class materials accessible, orderly

Notetaking

- recognizing directly stated main ideas
- recognizing indirectly stated main ideas
- distinguishing between main ideas and supporting details
- notetaking from written sources
- notetaking from oral sources

revising notes following a lecture

- indicating main ideas
- eliminating unnecessary details

- outlining from written sources

Textbook Usage

- pre-reading

effectively using each part:

- title page
- preface
- table of contents
- bibliography
- glossary
- index

(continued next page)

(Textbook Usage - continued)

- understanding charts and graphs
developing active reading strategies
    - highlighting
    - writing margin notes
    - skimming for review
paraphrasing
    - sentences
    - paragraphs concisely
summarizing
    - orally
    - in writing

Test Preparation

developing techniques to improve memorization
    - making summary sheets
    - categorizing and labeling information
- reviewing information daily
- studying for short and spaced intervals of time
- anticipating and answering essay test questions
- developing strategies for answering objective test questions

Use of Library

- card catalog
- reference materials
    - indexes (e.g. Reader's Guide)
    - atlases, almanacs, and encyclopedias
    - electronic information sources

ORAL COMMUNICATION

Receptive Language (listening)

- attending to oral language
- discriminating sounds and words
remembering factual material
    - words
    - sentences
- understanding word order and grammar
- remembering the sequence of instructions and ideas (continued next page)

(Receptive Language - continued)

- understanding main ideas
- understanding important details

interpreting oral language
- understanding non-verbal cues
- discerning speaker's intentions
- understanding figurative language, ambiguity, irony, and paradox
- making inferences
- drawing appropriate conclusions

Related Listening Skills

- paraphrasing
- asking questions for clarification

Expressive Language (speaking)

vocal production
- using correct pronunciation
- using appropriate volume, rate, intonation, pitch
- speaking fluently (avoiding constant revisions, lapses, and fillers)

semantics
- retrieving words
- using appropriate vocabulary

syntax
- generating complete sentences
- applying grammar rules

organization
- generating ideas
- staying with the topic
- supporting main ideas with relevant details
- organizing and sequencing information
- speaking concisely
- introducing and concluding ideas

pragmatics
- incorporating appropriate non-verbal communications (body language, space)
- using language appropriate to the context (formal, informal)
- responding independently (volunteering , asking questions, conveying concerns)
- detecting, correcting, and monitoring oral language errors

COMPUTER SKILLS

starting up
- turning machine on (if necessary)
- getting to MAIN MENU
- getting from MENU into PROGRAM
- formatting a diskette

using PROGRAM
- using OPEN and CLOSE
- starting a NEW document
- using SAVE and SAVE AS
- using PRINT

using special editing commands
- using left and center alignments
- selecting text
- using underlining, italics, and bold
- using CUT, COPY, and PASTE
- changing font type and size
- applying SPELLCHECKER, THESAURUS, and WORD COUNT
- formatting
- indents
- spacing
- margins
- using ruler

FILE MANAGEMENT
- moving files from disks to hard drive (and the reverse)
- creating and naming directories
- deleting, renaming, and copying files
- using the F:\HOME directory

using E-MAIL
- opening and sending messages
- using REPLY, FORWARD, and DELETE commands
- opening and adding attachments

WRITTEN COMPOSITION

Sentence Writing Skills

- writing a complete simple sentence
- using periods and capitalization appropriately
- identifying subject and verb in a simple sentence
- writing a compound sentence
- writing a complex sentence (continued next page)

(Sentence Writing Skills - continued)

- identifying coordinating conjunctions
- identifying subordinating conjunctions
- eliminating fragments or run-ons
- using sentence combining or reducing strategies
- varying sentence structure
- using commas appropriately in compound and complex sentences
- using advanced punctuation
- maintaining subject-verb agreement
- maintaining parallelism
- eliminating dangling modifiers

using appropriate diction

- using words precisely
- expanding vocabulary using dictionary and thesaurus

Paragraph Skills

- identifying and implementing basic paragraph structure
- topic sentence
- sentences of details
- concluding sentence
- staying with the topic
- generating sufficient details to support topic sentences
- sequencing information logically
- refining the topic sentence
- using transitions to connect sentences

Using a Writing Process

- generating sufficient ideas through use of brainstorming and/or freewriting techniques
- choosing an appropriate topic
- narrowing a topic

organizing ideas for writing

- categorizing information (main ideas, details)

generating an outline

- identifying components of an outline (topic, subtopics, details)
- modeling standard outline format
- including sufficient details

- using other organizational strategies (mapping, flowcharts)

- writing a paragraph or essay
- using a word-processing program for composing and revising

revising a draft of a a paragraph or essay

- evaluating content of writing for accuracy and support
- adding details to support or clarify ideas (continued next page)

(Using a Writing Process - continued)

- evaluating organizational patterns of writing
- getting feedback from instructor and/or peers

editing a draft

- using a proofreading checklist
- incorporating suggestions for improvement
- editing for mechanics and sentence structure
- using a spell-check program and dictionary to check spelling

Essay Structure

recognizing and implementing basic essay form using an outline

- thesis statement
- introductory paragraph
- body paragraphs
- concluding paragraph

- sequencing ideas within an essay logically
- refining the thesis statement
- using transitions to connect paragraphs

Writing about Texts

- including textual information in expository essays

summarizing a single source

- formulating the author's thesis
- organizing main ideas
- paraphrasing

writing an analytical essay

- formulating assertions
- selecting supporting evidence
- using quotations to support assertions
- connecting assertions to evidence

- synthesizing material from a variety of sources

HANDWRITING

- writing at a fluid pace
- writing at a slower pace to improve legibility

****TYPED COMMENT TO BE SIGNED BY TUTOR AND ADVISOR****

APPENDIX F

Study Skills Diagnostic Checklist
All Levels

Directions for use of checklist. Place a check on the first line if the student attains the skill with assistance, and place a check on the second line if the student accomplishes the skill independently.

1. Organizational Skills

___ ___ - maintains organization of classwork using the Master Notebook System
___ ___ - plans study time effectively
___ ___ - includes logical organization of ideas in writing
___ ___ - includes logical organization of ideas in speaking
___ ___ - demonstrates effective organization of space
___ ___ - demonstrates the ability to organize visual information

2. Main Ideas and Details

___ ___ - identifies directly stated main ideas in single paragraph selections
___ ___ - identifies directly stated main ideas in multi-paragraph selections
___ ___ - identifies unstated main ideas in single paragraph selections
___ ___ - identifies unstated main ideas in multi-paragraph selections
___ ___ - recognizes and understands placement of main ideas
___ ___ - paraphrases main ideas in single paragraphs to improve comprehension
___ ___ - paraphrases main ideas in multi-paragraph selections to improve comprehension
___ ___ - distinguishes between main ideas and details using different color highlighters in single paragraph selections
___ ___ - distinguishes between main ideas and details using different color highlighter in multi-paragraph selections
___ ___ - identifies types of details (supporting, example, comparative, etc.)
___ ___ - distinguishes importance of details
___ ___ - identifies topic sentences
___ ___ - identifies thesis statements

3. Two-Column Notes From Written Sources

___ ___ - uses two column format to distinguish between main ideas and supports details in short reading selections
___ ___ - uses two column note format for longer reading sections
___ ___ - takes notes from textbooks
___ ___ - takes notes for specific information (research)
___ ___ - revises notes
___ ___ - develops an individual notetaking system

4. Notetaking From Lectures

___ ___ - determines topics and main ideas
___ ___ - takes notes for main ideas or details
___ ___ - takes notes for both main ideas and details
___ ___ - edits notes and formulates questions as an aid to the study process
___ ___ - summarizes notes
___ ___ - asks appropriate questions during lectures
___ ___ - forms study guides from notes
___ ___ - practices notetaking skills during guest lectures
___ ___ - takes notes from videos

5. Active Reading

implements SQ3R by:

___ ___ - identifying the parts of textbook
___ ___ - survey reading (reading titles, subtopics, graphs, etc.)
___ ___ - questions (turns the subtopics into questions)
___ ___ - questions (answer the questions made from subtopic in writing)
___ ___ - highlights main ideas and details on 2nd reading
___ ___ - writing margin notes
___ ___ - understands and implements a variety of margin notes: (questions, paraphrased main ideas, analogies, connections)
___ ___ - recite (notetaking from the text)
___ ___ - review (summarize in paragraph form)

___ ___ - paraphrasing main ideas in writing
___ ___ * through use of synonyms
___ ___ * identifies key words
___ ___ * changes structural composition

___ ___ - recognizes organizational paragraph types (example, comparison, contrast)

6. Summarizing

___ ___ - forms skeletal outline of main ideas
___ ___ - applies summary format
___ ___ - includes topic sentence, body, and conclusion
___ ___ - understands and implements one paragraph summary variation, and three paragraph variation
___ ___ - summarizes short selections
___ ___ - paraphrases relevant main ideas and supporting details
___ ___ - employs and prioritizes presentation of author's main ideas
___ ___ - writes summaries of textbook chapters
___ ___ - summarizes class notes and lectures (weekly summaries)

7. Test-taking Skills

___ ___ - organizes information to study (lecture notes, study questions, text notes, summaries)
___ ___ - answers objective test questions (true/false, multiple choice, definitions, matching, fill in the blank)
___ ___ - answers short answer questions (two to three sentences)
___ ___ - interprets and answers essay test questions
___ ___ - studies from the master notebook
___ ___ - studies with a partner or group

8. Vocabulary Development

___ ___ - displays the ability to effectively use context clues
___ ___ - recognizes, defines, and understands specialized terminology
___ ___ - employs regular utilization of dictionary skills
___ ___ - employs regular utilization of thesaurus to increase vocabulary and vary word choice in writing
___ ___ - understands the meaning of prefixes, suffixes, and root words and uses that knowledge to define new words

9. Critical Reading Skills

___ ___ - recognizes and analyzes the authors structural organization
___ ___ - detects the author's bias and point of view
___ ___ - distinguishes fact from opinion
___ ___ - defines author's terminology
___ ___ - recognizes author's assumptions
___ ___ - examines critical perspectives
___ ___ - draws and formulates inferences
___ ___ - draws appropriate conclusions with supporting evidence
___ ___ - develops a variety of critical questions
___ ___ - analyzes critical perspectives
___ ___ - varies reading pace when reading from difficult sources

10. Critical Thinking Skills

___ ___ - examines the thinking that underlies emotions
___ ___ - distinguishes fact from opinion
___ ___ - transfers ideas to new contexts and situations
___ ___ - clarifies ideas, issues, and claims with the support of evidence
___ ___ - develops criteria for evaluating ideas and attitudes, and applies criteria accurately
___ ___ - uses insight from one subject to make connections in other subjects
___ ___ - makes plausible inferences with the aid of supporting evidence

11. Classroom Presentation Skills

___ ___ - determines the purpose of a question and responds appropriately
___ ___ - uses accurate and precise vocabulary when responding to questions
___ ___ - responds in complete sentences
___ ___ - understands and respects social cues from teachers and peers
___ ___ - monitors non-verbal language
___ ___ - offers information and insights without being called upon
___ ___ - respects differing points of view

12. Memory Skills

___ ___ - understands the application and demonstrates implementation of the memory process
___ ___ - understands the difference between short term and long term memory and varies memory techniques accordingly
___ ___ - improves memory through a variety of techniques and systems (Mnemonics, word association, Loci system, Acrostics, visualization)
___ ___ - independently uses memory techniques as an aid for studying and preparing for tests
___ ___ - analyzes learning style in order to choose the most appropriate memory strategy

13. Listening Skills

___ ___ - understands and makes the distinction between hearing and listening
___ ___ - recognizes the need for different levels of listening and demonstrates the ability to make those distinctions
___ ___ - asks internal questions to improve concentration
___ ___ - monitors listening behavior in order to avoid internal and external distractions
___ ___ - listens for questions from teachers and students
___ ___ - recognizes and listens for signal words
___ ___ - listens without judgment and is open minded

14. Writing Skills

___ ___ - understands the value of submitting clean, proofread work
___ ___ - transfers writing skills learned in English to the study skills classroom
___ ___ - writes in complete sentences
___ ___ - uses the writing process each time a writing assignment is given
___ ___ - incorporates new vocabulary in writing

___ ___ - writes topic sentences
___ ___ - writes thesis statements
___ ___ - incorporates the steps in the process of writing a summary
___ ___ - incorporates the structure of a three paragraph essay
___ ___ - demonstrates the ability to analyze signal words in the varying types of essay questions and alternates the structures accordingly

15. Research Skills

___ ___ - understands the organization of a library and is able to locate a variety of sources (Encyclopedia, Periodicals, Readers guides)
___ ___ - demonstrates the ability to locate information in the card catalogue
___ ___ - utilizes the brainstorming process to choose an appropriate topic
___ ___ - demonstrates the ability to sufficiently narrow topic
___ ___ - locates, gathers, and organizes information from one source
___ ___ - locates, gathers, and organizes information from two or more sources
___ ___ - utilizes the notetaking process to extract information from source(s)
___ ___ - paraphrases information accurately from sources
___ ___ - collects direct quotes from sources
___ ___ - outlines information by including subtopics and relevant details
___ ___ - writes a rough draft using outlines as a guide
___ ___ - demonstrates the ability to revise rough draft guided by teachers suggestions
___ ___ - writes a final draft that includes a title page, footnotes or endnotes, and a bibliography

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